

THE HOLLAND

OF TO-DAY

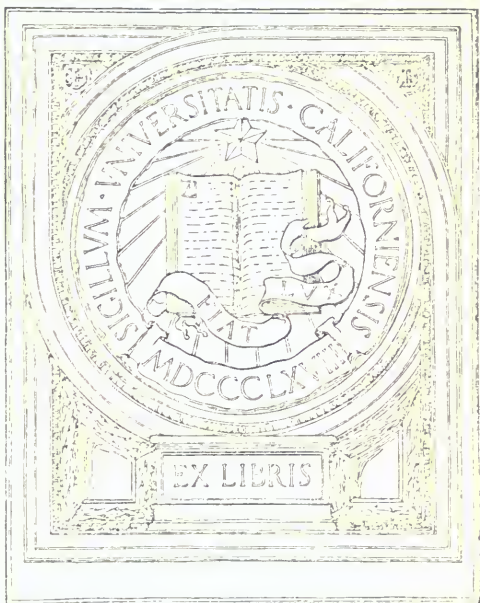
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The Holland of To-day

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45 cents in morocco.*

EDITED BY

A. VAN DOREN HONEYMAN

BOOKS ISSUED.

THE AZTECS. By THE EDITOR.

REINDEER-LAND. By THE EDITOR.

THE HOLLAND OF TO-DAY. By J. A. METS.

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THE ROOF-COUNTRY (Thibet).

Etc., Etc., Etc.

[Order of publication of volumes not certain.]



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Holland of To-day

BY

J. A. METS

Author of "Naval Heroes of Holland "



Plainfield, New Jersey
Honeyman & Company
1905

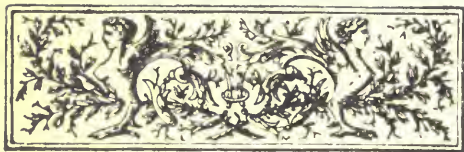
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Published May 1, 1905.



"Holland is a conquest made by man over the Sea; . . . it exists because the Hollanders preserve it; it will vanish whenever the Hollanders shall abandon it."

—DE AMICIS.

THE HOLLAND OF TO-DAY

CHAPTER I

The Country

The Name.—It is usual to apply the name Holland to what is now the kingdom of the Netherlands, which consists of thirteen provinces, and over which one of the noblest queens that ever reigned is the constitutional ruler, the good Wilhelmina. Since the death of the everywhere revered Victoria, she is held in greater honor and esteem than any other present European ruler.

The name Holland, however, properly belongs only to one of the largest political divisions of the whole country, namely, to the provinces of North and South Holland. These formerly were one, and constituted the powerful section of that name, when it was ruled by the independent Counts of Holland. Yet this name, and its more correct

geographical designation, "The Low Countries," virtually mean the same thing; at least such has been the common acceptation. It is usually said to have been derived from the fact that much of the land lies below the water-level, and so was regarded as *hol*, the Dutch for hollow; and therefore this descriptive name, "Holland," was given to the country. It is very doubtful, however, if the early inhabitants were sufficiently acquainted with the natural features of the country to be aware that some parts of it lay so low, and gave it this name for that reason. There was another fact they did know, as it was constantly before them. This was that the land was everywhere thickly wooded. Now, as the earliest settlers of whom we have knowledge came from Germany, and as these had the word *holt*, meaning wood, it is supposed by some that they naturally called their new, very thickly wooded home, "Holtland" (woodland), and that in the process of time the *t* dropped out and the name became Holland. But "Holtland," (woodland) would now be an utter misnomer, as a forest, or very extended tract of woodland, is not to be found.

The name Holland is seldom applied to the entire country, except in England and the United States. In France it is called "Les Pays-Bas;" in Germany, "die Niederlanden," each being the exact equivalent of a term used in England, and sometimes met with among us, "The Low Countries." In this latter term we have at once a comprehensive and fitting name, and also the exact translation of the word "Netherlands."

Natural Features.—The entire surface of the land is low, excepting in the east bordering on Germany. There it lies in many cases lower than the surface of the ocean. Here and there are elevations, indeed, dignified as “hills,” and sometimes even as “mountains,” but this is to be taken rather as a stretch of Dutch imagination than as actual fact. Even the so-called hills in the province of Guelderland and Overijssel would scarcely be regarded as more than hillocks by those accustomed to the soaring peaks of other lands. The higher places in the sections bordering on the North Sea, or the great rivers, are only elevations thrown up by the original inhabitants as places of refuge in times of inundations. Such are utilized now as pleasure resorts, and frequently go by some fanciful name, e. g., the “Kinderberg,” (the Children’s Mountain), either because the children resort thither in summer for rollicking picnics, or that the name has survived from the times when a safe refuge was found for them from the all-devouring waters, while the elders went to save their scanty goods after first battling with the overwhelming tide.

If one should lay side by side two maps of the Netherlands, one of the country as it was found by the Batavians or Catti, who first settled the islands about the mouths of the river Maas (or Meuse), not far from the present great commercial city of Rotterdam (provided such a map could be found), and the other that of the present Kingdom, he would scarcely recognize the country as the same. On the old map he would not find that

great arm of the North Sea, called the Zuyder Zee; but, where the new map shows that tempestuous body of water, he would find on the old a thickly wooded country, cut by a river or estuary, at the lower end of which would be the ancient lake Flevo. All this wooded land the ocean swallowed up, or carried down to its great deeps, when, in 1170, the Zuyder Zee was formed and the North Sea attempted to get back its own. At one time old Ocean had doubtless covered a great part of the land, and Neptune had swayed his unrestrained sceptre where now are richly cultivated fields. Some day, not far in the future, the energetic, tireless Hollanders will rob him again of that vast inland sea. And then a new map will again have to be made on which there shall be no longer the Zuyder Zee.

Present Physical Features.—In many respects the Netherlands differs from all other countries in physical features. As already intimated, the surface generally is level, the line of vision being scarcely broken by an elevation worthy of being dignified as a hill. So one will not find there that charm of scenery which is the effect of the variety afforded by hill and dale, by cool, shady forests and waterfalls.

Yet, though flat, it is far from monotonous. The monotony is everywhere relieved, one may say eliminated, by the many trees that, often in double rows, skirt every highway and canal. These seldom, if ever, run in direct, unbroken lines. In whatever direction the eye turns, the horizon is bounded by a line of noble lindens, elms, or beech-

es, that gracefully curve this way and that, making an endless line of beauty. Frequently the trees rise in equal symmetry and meet at the top, making in summer an overarching avenue of brilliant green, through and under which, afoot or in some vehicle, one can pursue his delightful way from town to town. As looked at from a distance, you may see, rising out of those thick masses of green, some slender steeple, or high, red-tiled roof, that forms a fine contrast to this emerald enfolding. To the stranger these bits of exquisite beauty, that meet his eye every now and then, are a cause for constant surprise. He supposed the Low Countries to be a land of sand and marshes, utterly devoid of romantic beauty; unworthy of the brush of a master painter or the pen of an inspired poet. Yet more exquisite pictures it would be difficult to find in any land than those to be seen on a bright day in spring or summer from the deck of the boat on the canal cut through the island of Walcheren to shorten the distance between Rotterdam and Flushing.

Supposing you are at the village of Souburg, looking north; at a distance of two miles or more rises a high mass of foliage of the deepest green, above which project four architectural forms of varied and contrasting style. The most conspicuous is that of the high steeple of the New Church of Middelburg, rising to a height of four hundred feet, and well called "The Long John;" its great height terminating in a handsome, imperial crown. At a short distance from this appears the beautiful, though much smaller, tower of the City Hall,

which again is followed by that of the so-called Choir-Church, while a little farther on looms up the handsome dome of the East Church. Each tower, steeple, or dome, differs from the rest in shape and form, and yet, with the undulating green above which they rise, strikes the eye with an effect like that produced upon the ear by some wondrous chord in music.

Or, take a walk on some sunny morning along the long dyke leading from Delfthaven to Rotterdam. Until you reach the environs of the great commercial town there is nothing to attract the eye but fat meadows filled with large, big-shouldered Frisian cattle, and well-tilled fields bearing large crops of heavy-headed grain. All common enough, and, when looked at for mile after mile, somewhat monotonous. But the dyke has been passed over, and the tall steeples of Holland's busiest mart have long since been in plain view, when suddenly, as by a magician's wand, there bursts upon the eye as lovely a bit of scenery as was ever looked upon. A charming strip of clear, unpolluted water (it is perhaps the old city moat) winding in gentle curves, whose surface the sun is penciling in lines of gold, giving a brighter shimmer as it is cut by softly gliding white swans and ducks; an artistic bridge overarchng it with a single span; on each side of the water a double line of fine trees, behind and through which glimpses are here and there given of handsome modern dwellings. Bits of similar exquisite beauty are found in the environs of nearly every city, where the ramparts have been razed and the old

curving moats are lined with winding boulevards, bordered with noble trees.

Or sit down restfully some August afternoon, at about five o'clock, on one of the settees on the sea-boulevard, the old sea-wall at Flushing. The sun is casting all the full splendor of his glory upon the North Sea, making a wide path of gold. A fishing smack, with its odd, shapeless form and dark, tan-colored sails, is just setting out for the place where the best haul can be made. It is as ungainly an object as ever was fashioned by the hand of man. But it nears that golden path, and already it is being haloed by that exquisite light. And now it enters into the full glory, and steers right along and through that liquid gold; a thing transformed, a creation of beauty from masttop to keel. After this comes a brig sailing along that same sublime way; this, too, is changed as by a miracle in all its spars and sails and rigging into an immense masterpiece of the most skilful worker in the purest of metals. A scene that is well worth going many miles to see, and one which the sunny climes of Italy could scarce surpass. The cloud effects are also frequently exceedingly fine, and have been fitly described and enthusiastically celebrated in Havard's *Through the Heart of Holland*.

The climate is similar to that of England and the Middle States of the Union. There are, owing to the proximity of the sea and the numerous rivers, frequent rains and fogs, though the latter are neither so frequent nor so dense as those of London. The winters are more severe than those

of Great Britain, though there have been years when there was scarcely enough ice to give opportunity for the great national sport of skating. This was the case particularly in the years from 1847 to 1850. One of the severest winters ever known was that of 1465, when the Meuse was frozen solid, at which time Duke Arnold of Guelderland was treacherously seized by his brother Adolf, and carried across the ice to the castle of Buren and imprisoned. This event led to the incorporation of the Great Duchy of Guelderland, with the already extensive dominions of Burgundy. Then there was the severe winter of 1740, when the whole Zuyder Zee was frozen over, so that people not only skated on its surface from one point to another in all directions, but heavily laden wagons were led over in perfect safety.

The winter most memorable in the history of the Netherlands, however, was that of 1794-'95, when the solidly frozen rivers gave easy access to the French legions under Pichegru into the heart of the country. This led to the final downfall of the Republic. The author recalls one, somewhere in the 'forties, when the mouth of the Scheldt was frozen over from shore to shore, a distance of nearly four miles, and when the ice floes lay piled up by the tide to the height of some twenty feet.

But when winter has done its worst it lets up and gives way to spring, instead of, as frequently with us, January "lingering in the lap of May." There, at least, the quotation is always appropriate:

"Hail, gentle Spring, ethereal mildness come!"

Then the gentle touch of the genial sun and the soft breath of the zephyrs caress shrub and tree and plant again, and soon the air is laden with the fragrance of the hawthorn and lilac; and is melodious the whole live-long day with the song of the lark, and through the night with the music of the nightingale. The goldfinch again tries to pass itself off for a canary, and the golden-billed blackbird trills with liquid notes, and the saucy magpie, on lawn or road, stares you out of countenance. Then, too, the Dutch boys and girls go forth to gather the May-bugs, either by shaking them by hundreds out of the trees, or by digging them out of the ground. These bugs, by the way, are larger and handsomer than our own June-bugs, being flatter in the back and glossier; more like our grape-bugs. They afford much sport to the young folks, either by being made to fly with a thread fastened to one of the legs, or by being harnessed in teams of four to a wagon made out of a large carrot, cut lengthwise, from which the core has been removed, while cross-sections of the larger end of the carrot are made to do duty as wheels.

The summers are never so hot as in our Middle States, the thermometer seldom going much above 80 degrees. What they call an intolerably hot day, to us would seem quite moderate. Their falls, however, lack the gorgeousness of ours. Nature does not array itself in that splendor of foliage which lends such a charm here to the dying season.

First Settlers.—When and by whom this land

of forests, marshes, ponds and rivers was first settled it is impossible now to tell. That the time must have been centuries before our era is proved by many objects of which not a trace can be found among the known first settlers; such as the dolmens, or cromlechs, in the province of Drente. These are immense structures of massive, hewn stones, sometimes set in a circle, the like of which are found in several sections of England, and elsewhere in Europe, Asia and America, and supposed to be of Celtic or Druidic origin. Stone weapons and stone household utensils have also been found there; also altars dedicated to certain gods unknown among the early German tribes. Among the latter are the curious stone-altars dedicated to the goddess Nehellenia, preserved in the museum at Middelburg. These altars were dug up in recent years near the shores of the island of Walcheren, and were found beneath the sand, lying face down; from which fact, and from their great number, the supposition has arisen that, after the completion of the sacrifices, the altars were thrown into the sea as an additional token of homage to the goddess. What became of these earliest inhabitants, whether they migrated or were absorbed by or amalgamated with the subsequent settlers, we know not.

We can only go back, in historic times, to the Batavians, a German tribe, who, with the Catti, settled the islands about the Meuse, the Rhine and the Scheldt. The time of their incoming is obscure. The earliest mention of them is in the account given of their employment by Cæsar in

the Roman legions, when Cæsar made an alliance with them, and found in them some of his bravest troops. He even took some of them for his body-guard. As horsemen and swimmers they had not their equals among the Romans, or any others of their allies. Their chief implements of war were the spear, bow and arrow, axes and shields; their use of the sword they learned from the Romans. They built their dwellings mainly upon heights, thrown up for the purpose, as a protection against the frequent inroads of the sea and rivers. These heights were called *vliedbergen*, (hills of refuge). Some of these, as mentioned before, still exist, though now called by more fanciful names.

The connection of the Batavi with the Romans was of great benefit to these early Netherlanders, since from them they imbibed much that made them more civilized; while in following the conquering legions to Rome and Greece they brought back from those lands of luxury something of their arts and knowledge, and were better fitted to become the founders of a nation, whose fame in war, art, science and literature has become world-wide.

But with the Roman virtues and civilization these early Hollanders also learned the vices to which the Roman soldiery gave free rein when at rest from war in camp or stronghold. Those vices and virtues were the seeds from which much of the national character developed.

The last time the name of the Batavi appears in the country's history is when the Emperor Ha-

drian visited the Low Countries and established a sort of frontier town, calling it Forum Hadriani, which, later, bore the name of "Voorburg," (literally Frontier Castle). At the feasts given on this occasion mention is made of one Soranus, as the best archer among all the German tribes. After him the name of the brave founders of the Dutch nation—the Batavi—never occurs again, till revived for a brief time by Napoleon I., who created the Batavian Republic. It has survived for the past century, however, and is likely to live on for centuries to come, in Batavia, the capital of the Dutch East Indies, "the Queen of the East;" and it has been reproduced in the little city of the same name in the state of New York, and in other towns in America.

The Floods of Holland.—The suffixes "dam" and "dyke," attached to so many names of Dutch cities and towns, form, as it were, an epitome of the country's history, suggestive of the age-long, heroic struggles on the part of this people with sea and stream; and to him that "hath ears to hear" they are eloquent with the ever-repeated epic, telling the story of the relentless battle with the raging waters, and mournful with that "requiem o'er the dead" that wave and storm are forever singing for the thousands who have perished beneath the floods.

The story of the many floods from which Holland has suffered, with its accounts of wide-sweeping devastation, miraculous escapes and preservations, heroic self-sacrifice and rescue, would make a long narrative, full of dramatic interest. We

can only note some salient points in the list of these disasters.

In four centuries, from the Twelfth to the Sixteenth, there were no less than twenty of these calamitous floods, besides innumerable lesser ones, engulfing thousands of men, women and children, countless herds of cattle and horses, and making a desert waste where before had been rich farms and prosperous towns. In 1170 the North Sea made that tremendous break which created the greater part of the present Zuyder Zee, at which time sea-fish were caught in the streets of Utrecht. In 1421 a storm from the northwest sent the waters of the German ocean careering over the land at the same time that it backed up those of the rivers, and the two resistless forces, combined, swallowed up seventy-two towns, villages and hamlets, with all they contained; only fifty of them rose again at the recession of the waters. The calamity at this time was made still greater not only by the utter destitution of the immediate sufferers, but by the general poverty, the country having been well-nigh completely stripped by long continued, civil wars, so that there was no money to succor the victims. This was called the "St. Elizabeth Flood," from the date on which it happened, November 9, being dedicated to that saint in the old Roman Calendar.

Even in the past century three very destructive floods have occurred; that of 1825, which devastated four provinces; of 1855, which laid waste nearly all of the provinces of Guelderland and Utrecht, and a great part of North Brabant,

caused by the overflowing of the Rhine; and that of the early spring of 1861, when the late King William III. gained the hearts of his people by his visits to the devastated districts and his benevolent alleviation of suffering. Well may De Amicis say: "It is plain that miracles of courage, constancy and industry must have been accomplished by the Hollanders, first in creating and afterwards in preserving such a country. The enemy from which they had to rescue it was triple: the sea, the lakes, the rivers. They drained the lakes, drove back the sea, and imprisoned the rivers."

The Dunes.—Before we pass to the methods employed by the people for this drainage, let us glance at one of the means that Nature herself has employed to stem the onrush of the tempest-driven waves toward its prey; at the ramparts which the sea itself has thrown up against its own assaults. These are the *dunes*, the prominent natural feature along the entire coast. They are sandhills of greater or lesser height formed by the sea itself, making its own waves the carriers, piling them in irregular heaps on the shore, and pounding them almost into solidity by the billows that seem sent only to carry back to its depths what it had grudgingly given. Some of these dunes make quite lofty hills, especially those along the coast of the more northerly provinces, affording from their tops fine views of the far-sweeping, many-voiced sea. In the neighborhood of The Hague, where some of these high sandy elevations are found, they are called *kykduinen*, (observation dunes).

These dunes are often covered by a coarse kind of wiry grass, either growing naturally or planted by the shore-workers for the purpose of preventing the gales from blowing away these guardians of the inland. When this grass is young, the strong, fibrous roots thrown out by it over the sand, like so many nervous fingers clutching the unstable mass, resemble somewhat the star-like form of young cranberry plants. Its tough, woody, sharp-edged stalks form the abode of countless little bugs, the size of ladybugs, of every variety of color, whose highly burnished, glossy wings reflect the rays of the sun and fill the space around with iridescent hues; a very paradise for some entomologist. These beautiful creatures the boys and girls gather by bottlesful.

A singular method is employed on the island of Walcheren to prevent the spread inland of the dunes by the force of the terrific gales. This is the planting of a forest of small trees, whose branches become twisted and interwoven so closely around and above that they almost hide the sun. It extends for a distance of miles along the inner side of the dunes, forming a continuous arbor, and is intersected by paths that make romantic lovers' walks for the peasant lads and lasses. The whole is called by the appropriate name, "The Mantel," which is the equivalent for our word "curtain."

Let us imagine ourselves in a company of healthy, stout, rosy-cheeked Dutch boys and girls, and share their fun in plunging, or rolling, down one of the dunes on the seaside, in a spot where

none of the wiry grass would hurt face or eyes. Suddenly we come down from the yielding sand and strike the beach, which, of course, we imagine will give a soft stopping-place. But, instead, we find it hard enough to give us a sudden jar, to our own painful chagrin, but to the great delight of the native youngsters. For Old Neptune has been beating this shore for ages and ages with his ponderous waves, until the beach is as solid as a floor. This firmness is characteristic of many of the beaches along the coast, particularly at the bathing-places of Flushing, Domburg and Scheveningen. The two places first named are not yet popularized as summer resorts for sea-bathing, but nowhere may one find a better and more gently sloping beach, or have greater zest in gamboling in the white-capped billows.

Seaside Resorts.—Flushing has come into notice as a seaside resort in comparatively recent years, and is not much frequented now by visitors from abroad. But it is sure to become better known since the establishment at this port of a fine line of steamboats to London, making it the shortest route from England to the Continent. It has been made easy of access also by a tram, or electric, line, running direct from Middelburg and Flushing to the beach hotel and cottages. Domburg has an equally fine beach, a handsome hotel and a number of neat summer cottages, and was for some time the favorite seaside resort of Carmen Sylva, the Queen of Roumania.

Scheveningen, however, has for years been

widely known as one of the finest resorts on any of the European coasts, and is visited each summer by numbers of the rich and great from all parts of the civilized world. The dunes that here skirt the beach are crowned with fine hotels and cottages, many of the latter being found, also, in the part of the town lying nearer the shore, while everything to attract the eye and ear, and to deplete the purse of the visitor, abounds.

Bathing Machines.—There are at these seaside places two conveniences for the bather that strike the American as peculiar. They are the bathing wagons and the singular chairs arranged along the beach. The former are bathing-booths on wheels, in which the bather can dress and undress at his leisure and in perfect seclusion. When he is ready for the plunge, the bath-wagon is either pulled by a horse, or pushed by attendants, into the water, and, when ready to come out, the same means brings him back to shore. The chairs are made of wicker, or bamboo, and look like old-fashioned cradles with the rockers off. They are set down upright at the foot-end, the rounded top serving as a canopy to protect the eyes of the sitter against the sun.

The Dykes.—If the dunes were the only ramparts this little country had for protection against its ancient foe, the ocean, it would long since have been swallowed up. As said before, again and again the sea has hurled itself upon these shores, and swept away in its yawning vortexes whole sections with their inhabitants, so that from no

coast could the words of Bailey be more fittingly uttered,—

“Of thousands thou both sepulchre and pall,
Old Ocean, art !”

But whenever the assault had been most violent and the havoc most disheartening, the indomitable people would push another of those adamantine fingers, the great sea-dykes, into the very face of their foe, as if to say, ‘Thus far shalt thou come and no farther.’ This work has gone on for centuries and centuries, till to-day every part of the country exposed to the violence of the sea, or the lawlessness of rivers, is lined with these mighty ramparts.

The first of these defences were built by the Romans, either by surrounding their camps with high earth-walls, if they were near the sea, or along the rivers to keep them within proper boundaries. After the Romans left, the inhabitants were strangely slow in protecting their property in this way, possibly because their ceaseless contests with each other made them pay more attention to warring with human foes than to combating the waters. As their losses from the latter became more severe, they were driven to multiply the barriers. In this the monks sometimes set the example, as in the province of Friesland after the inundations there in the Thirteenth Century. It was in the latter century, and in the following one, that numerous dykes began to be laid across the lowest-lying section, by means of which what before were marsh and bog were changed into

stretches of arable land. The lands so enclosed are called "polders." So, by degrees, that which at first was only a local attempt at protection became a universal system of safeguard, by the establishment of what is called the *Waterstaat*, (Water Department), which embraces the construction and care of the dykes, canals, polders and sluices; one of the most important departments of the civil government of the Netherlands. The officials appointed to oversee this work receive a civil engineering education specially adapted to their service, while the laborers employed are also specially trained. The cost of construction and maintenance of these water-defences is enormous. It has been said that if the dyke protecting Walcheren, the smallest of the numerous islands formed by the delta of the Scheldt, had been built of solid copper, its cost could not have been greater.

At the city of Helder, the most northerly point of North Holland, is a massive dyke over six miles in length and extending into the sea for nearly eight hundred feet. Whenever there is the slightest possibility of the ever-ready foe to make an attack upon the land, from the northeastern corner of Groningen to the most southwesterly point of Zeeland, these cyclopean bastions are erected, and ceaselessly watched by a corps of builders and guards.

The dykes are built in the most scientific and substantial manner, the granite, or basalt, and timber coming mainly from Norway, as the country itself has none. The massive piles are curiously protected against the ravages of a destruc-

tive worm, a borer, supposed to have been introduced into this neighborhood by a vessel coming from foreign seas. Into every part of the piles that may be exposed to the attacks of the destructive insect short stout nails are driven; and these are placed so close along the entire pile that not the smallest spot is left exposed. This same precaution is employed with all the timbers that are used in the jetties or wharves of the various cities.

The dykes are provided with sluices, some of great size, for the purpose of letting the water flow out where it has accumulated on the enclosed land, and also, in case of need, to let it flow unrestrained over the adjacent country. Thus water, that so often has been the most destructive enemy of the Netherlands, can be made into the country's most effective ally. This latter has been demonstrated again and again, notably in the deliverance of the city of Leyden during its famous siege, and in the war with France during the reign of Louis XIV., when the opening of the sluices by the Dutch put a stop to the farther advance of that king's victorious army. It is believed that in a single day, and at a moment's notice of the approach of a hostile army by land, every foot of the country, except the higher portions of the province of Guelderland, could be submerged under water so deep that no army could pass through it.

The Canals.—Another interesting part of the water-system of the Netherlands is found in its canals. They form the connecting links everywhere between cities, towns and villages. They

were formerly used for communication between distant points fully as much as the highways, when the canal-boat was the most common conveyance of passengers and merchandise. As modes of travel, they are now rapidly disappearing, however, giving place to the tramway and electric road, while for the transportation of freight the steam railways have made them almost useless. The old-fashioned canal-boat is also giving place (where the canals are still used for passenger traffic) to handsome little steamboats, in which a trip among the cultivated fields to some of the quaint interior villages affords no small enjoyment to the sojourner.

One might go far before seeing the old-fashioned, clumsy *trekschuyt* (literally, draught-boat) pulled by horses, or, as they were said to be in some places, drawn along laboriously by women. This use of women the author has never seen in the Netherlands, and, therefore, if this occurred anywhere, it must have been rare. As to the ordinary canal-boat drawn by horses or mules, they are much more common in our own country than in this land of canals.

Some of the smaller canals will doubtless continue to be used for a long time to come, as they are employed for the conveyance to market of the products of the fields and orchards from the truck-farms in the neighborhood of the larger cities. In such case the main canal is intersected at various points by smaller canals, that run in and out among the farms. From there the fresh fruit and vegetables are brought in dories to each con-

necting point with the main canal, and then loaded upon a larger boat. The latter is not pulled by horses, nor propelled by steam, but is pushed along by means of a long pole, the lower end of which is set against a cleat in the bow of the boat, while the larger end rests against the boatman's shoulder. As the steps of the sturdy Dutchman are vigorous and rapid, the progress is not so slow as one might imagine.

Every city and village in the Netherlands is intersected by canals, some of them running between the rear of two rows of houses, when they give a peculiar and interesting view of backyard life. The only exception to this is The Hague, which, not being intended for a commercial town, had no need of these inlets and outlets for vessels. In some cities these canals (often called *grachts*, which may mean canal, or moat), are almost as numerous as the streets. This is the case particularly in Amsterdam, which, for this reason has been aptly called "The Venice of the North." There they follow the semi-circular form of the city, making no less than six large semi-circular canals, and two lesser intersecting ones. They are crossed by bridges to the number of three hundred and fifty—a bridge for nearly every day in the year.

Ship Canals.—Since 1825, several large ship-canals have been constructed at immense cost for the purpose of giving better access to the sea for the cities of Amsterdam and Rotterdam. The first was the North Holland Canal, which joined Amsterdam to Helder and Nieuwe Diep (the

New Deep) near the northern extremity of the province of North Holland. This gave the city direct access to the ocean, instead of, as before, requiring its vessels to be sent by way of the river Y and the shallow, but dangerous, Zuyder Zee. It was fifty-two miles long, and had a width of from one hundred to one hundred and thirty feet, with a depth of over twenty feet. But it failed of its intended purpose to make Amsterdam a large maritime city, and it lost much of its importance when large ocean steamers began to replace sailing vessels. Another was, therefore, constructed from Amsterdam to Ymuiden, and was called the North Sea Canal. This was opened in 1876. It is only fifteen miles long and of greater depth and width than the former. To construct it, the immense swamp that forms the southwesterly and marshy part of the Zuyder Zee, called the Pampus, had to be closed, while the port of Amsterdam was improved every way, so as to accommodate ships of the largest draft. The Rhine-Merwede Canal was also constructed. It empties directly into the North Sea Canal, and thus gives to the city direct connection with the Rhine.

The highly profitable results of the construction of the North Sea Canal appeared immediately, when from 243 ships, that passed the great locks at Ymuiden the first year of the opening of the canal, the number leaped to 3376 the next year, while in 1887 it had nearly doubled this number, being then 6256 vessels.

But the increasing size and draft of the ocean

steamers made this North Sea Canal inadequate to the commercial demands of the city, so that another canal had to be constructed. This was opened for traffic in December, 1896, and was deepened again in 1899. It runs almost directly by the side of that opened in 1876, and has the same length, but with a width of one hundred and sixty-five feet, and a depth, at low water, of thirty-two feet, and, at high water, of thirty-eight feet. Vessels are admitted to this at Ymuiden by means of immense locks worked by electricity. These constitute a specimen of engineering ingenuity and skill that place it among the most notable works of the kind in the world. The Rhine-Merwede Canal, mentioned above, is seventy-two miles long, sixty-six feet wide at the bottom and one hundred and seven feet at the water-line. To construct it a canal was dug to the small river Merwede, which was dredged and deepened, and from thence another canal was constructed to connect that river with the Rhine. The cost of all this was again enormous, but is being rapidly repaid by the immense increase in the commerce of the city. This is shown by the fact that in 1899, by this canal, 2024 vessels entered and 2011 cleared from the port of Amsterdam, the tonnage entering and clearing being respectively 7,004,131 and 6,924,934.

Ditches.—Closely allied to and, indeed, immediately connected with the canals, are numerous ditches, that are universal in the country districts, and that divide the fields and farms. A fence, whether of wood or wire, is scarcely to be

seen. Ditches do what is performed by fences with us, and serve both for keeping the cattle from wandering off and for drainage. Sometimes there is an absence of water in these ditches, and the mud and ooze are allowed to accumulate in them; this strikes the stranger as a serious menace to health. From time to time, however, the muck and mud are dug out and spread over the fields, serving as an excellent fertilizer.

The Windmills.—A feature of the Netherlands even more distinctive than its canals are the windmills. At almost every turn their mighty-winged arms are battling with the air, ready to bid defiance to a host of Don Quixotes. Some of them are large structures, the upper part being of wood and mounted with a movable cap, in which the immense wings are fixed. The wings revolve with the wind, so that from whatever quarter it blows the mill can do its work. The lower part is usually of brick, and is in immediate connection with the miller's dwelling. Between the upper and lower halves runs a wide gallery around the circumference, from which the miller can reach the wings to adjust the sails. Sometimes small boys get up on this and climb the ladder-like wings, when they are not in motion. This is a perilous adventure, as was proved in the case of a little fellow, once, who had climbed some distance up the wing of one of these tall mills, when the wind sprang up, and the miller, who knew nothing of the lad's being there, started the mill. The poor little "dare-devil" would doubtless have

been hurled to a horrible death, if a chance passer-by had not heard his agonized screams and warned the miller to stop the mill.

These mills are used for a variety of purposes: for grinding grain, sawing wood, crushing stone, pulverizing chemicals, and for the draining of flooded fields, marshes, or lakes. Their use for drainage purposes deserves more than mere mention. The places to be drained are first surrounded by dykes, and these again by canals, or ditches. Then, from the great force-pump in the mill, the suction pipes are let down into the flooded levels and the water pumped out over the dyke into the canal, which carries it, either directly or by way of some river, to the North Sea. Every gallon so carried off bears with it a hearty farewell from the inhabitants of the district, who thus get rid of the troublesome and destructive element, and gain, in its stead, fertile fields, luxuriant crops and rich meadows, dotted with their handsome black and white cattle. In this way, during the Seventeenth Century, in less than forty years twenty-six different lakes were drained. Early in the Nineteenth Century, 15,000 acres were redeemed in the province of North Holland alone, and in South Holland, from 1800 to 1844, 72,500 acres were reclaimed; while from 1500 to 1858 in the entire country some 887,500 acres were turned from a watery waste into rich, alluvial fields. For a number of years the people of South Holland had been singing concerning Haarlem Lake:

"Groote Plas, Groote Plas,
'K won je leeggemalen was!"
("Mighty Pond, Mighty Pond,
Would you were completely drained!")

In 1852 the popular wish was fully granted, and the waters that had been for centuries a perpetual menace to the nearby cities of Haarlem, Leyden and Amsterdam, were sent back to the sea with the command never to return. The area so drained had a circumference of nearly twenty-seven miles, and the work required thirty-six months for its completion. For this, however, not wind but steam mills were employed. The great gulf of the Zuyder Zee will be the next to be changed into dry and inhabitable land.

Highways and Streets.—The highways are among the most beautiful found in any land. They are paved, usually, with vitrified yellow brick, and are kept in constant repair. Noble, overarch-ing trees line their sides, often in double rows, and are kept trimmed close for a height of twelve feet or more, so as to permit the winds to sweep through them over the road-bed, and prevent the accumulation of mud, or damp, a measure particularly necessary in a land of so much mist and rain. Another charm is added to the roads by far-stretching hedges of hawthorn. When these are in bloom, during the month of May, a drive along these beautiful canopied roads is a delight worth going far to enjoy.

One of the most charming of these roads is that from The Hague to Scheveningen. Indeed, Scheveningen owes much of its supremacy as such

to this very road. It runs through what appears as a noble forest, the product of the labor of the beloved Father Cats, at one time Secretary of State of the Dutch Republic, and the poet most cherished by the people. When he set out these trees there was nothing but a sandy waste. Now an avenue of fine elms lines the main highway, which is flanked on one side by a tram-line, and it again has at its side a delightful footpath. One who should go exploring in these woods would, if he took the proper direction, (to the right, as one goes to the sea) come upon most agreeable surprises.

One is a beautiful park, tastefully laid out, with handsome villas or summer residences scattered through it. Perhaps a still greater surprise, however, is in the fact that, while the country everywhere seems to be one unbroken level, here one finds elevations and depressions, planted with varied shrubs and flowers, or beautifully green with a soft, velvety sward, while a glassy lake, with many windings, lies between banks of considerable height. On the other side of The Hague lies the House in the Woods, where the Hague Peace Tribunal held its first sessions, and in the park of which are the finest beeches to be found in the Netherlands.

If the highways are commendable, the streets in many cities are abominable. They are often too narrow for two vehicles to pass, a fault common to some streets in other cities in Europe; while the pavement consists of very rough cobblestones, over which the wheels rattle and the wood-

en shoes clatter. It makes most uncomfortable walking for the foreigner accustomed to the smoother macadam, or asphalt pavement. In this, however, they are no worse than many streets in the city of Brooklyn, which are as badly and roughly paved as any in the Netherlands. In Holland the conditions are made still worse for the footfarer by the utter absence in most cities of sidewalks. It seems as if those who had the laying out of these cities were influenced by the rough experience the nation had in its progress through the centuries, and had thought it fitting that their countrymen should be kept mindful of this, through all coming generations, by their own rough passage along the streets. They have purposely misplaced a comma in the quotation, "There is a providence which shapes our ends, rough hew them as we may," and made it read, "There is a providence which shapes our ends rough, hew them as we may." Still in some Holland cities asphalt is taking the place of cobblestones, and these equal the best of such roadways anywhere.

Whatever the pavement, however, the streets are everywhere kept scrupulously clean. Some day in every week the industrious housewives, or servant-girls, may be seen at a regular hour in the morning—a time as unvarying as the march of the planets—with water and brooms, (brooms made of twigs), scouring the pavement until every particular cobblestone shines as if polished by hand. Each of the scrubbing contingent takes exactly one-half of the street. The buckets used

are frequently handsome cedar pails, whose hoops of brass shine like burnished gold.

Agriculture.—It would be difficult to find anywhere better cultivated and more productive farms than in the Netherlands. The crops are much the same as in America; but the Dutch farmer, like his brother farmer in England, seems to be able to get more from an acre than is common with agriculturists; and there is not a product he cultivates, but his industry, care and skill bring it to the utmost perfection. This is due largely to the attention paid by the government to agriculture, and the careful experiments made and instruction given by skilled specialists. The wheat of Zeeland, at one time, vied with the best of the Polish or Russian red, the two together producing the finest loaves and rolls.

While the larger fruits, such as apples and pears, do not generally equal the American in variety, beauty, or flavor, in the smaller fruits, seen in the markets, or peddled along the streets, one will find finer and more luscious specimens than ever tickled the palate elsewhere. This is particularly true of cherries and raspberries. Of the latter they produce some of enormous size and of a splendid, deep color; while of the former those raised in largest quantities are in the neighborhood of Tiel, in the province of Utrecht.

Floriculture.—Great masses of flowers give special beauty to the fields in some parts of the Low Countries, particularly those in the vicinity of Haarlem. Here, from earliest spring to latest fall, the goddess Flora dips her pencil in ever-

varying hues, and decks the fields from horizon to horizon with every charm of her many-colored treasures. Throughout the three seasons, so long as sun, air and soil can combine to sustain growth, the fields are rich with bright hues and odorous with that fragrance which is wedded to beauty. Beginning with the crocus in the spring, it is no sooner gone than the many-colored bells of the clustered hyacinths follow; these to be succeeded by the equally varied tulip, from the purest white to the deepest red-brown, almost black. These again are followed in the order of the season by masses of lilies, geraniums, roses, gladiolas, chrysanthemums and cosmos, the latter the flower that by its delicate foliage and exquisite tints seems to bring consolation for the loss of all the floral wealth that the dying year carries with it to its grave, and the promise of a coming revival of all that the generous sky and soil can produce.

In this section, also, flowering shrubs, among which the rhododendron is conspicuous, are raised. Bulbs form no insignificant article among the exports from the Netherlands. Of all flowering plants the tulip-bulb has always been the most valuable to Holland. During the famous tulip craze in the Seventeenth Century, one single bulb was sold for the fabulous sum of \$20,000. The story goes that, during the time of that mania, a sailor once almost created a riot in the market-place of Haarlem by taking a tulip-bulb from a stand, and, mistaking it for an onion, deliberately peeling it. He would have gone on with his ex-

pensive lunch, valued at hundreds of florins, if he had not forcibly been made aware of his mistake.

Some years ago a new tulip was named "Abraham Lincoln," and some bulbs of it were presented to members of the Holland Society of New York, who brought them home with them. It is said some of these are now blooming in many American gardens. The central point of this great flower district is the pretty village well named Bloemendaal (flowery vale).

Peat.—As this leading national fuel will be named, a brief account of it may be of interest. The peat is the result of the accumulation for centuries of fibrous, woody vegetable matter, in bogs and marshes, where it has from time to time settled by its own weight in a succession of accumulating layers, and become more or less solidified. In Holland its greatest deposits are in the province of Drente, where the city of Hoozeveen ("high peat"), forms the centre of the peat district and industry. Its importance as a fuel may be gathered from the fact that in only thirty years time some 3,790,000,000 bushels of peat were dug and shipped, which paid to the government in internal revenue forty-nine million florins, equal to \$20,000,000.

There are two kinds of peat, one lying more or less deep under a layer of moss, the other directly on the surface. In both cases the beds are of varying thickness. In getting at the first kind, the layer of moss is taken off and spread out on some distant part of the peat-field to dry. From this moss a fine fibre is manufactured, which is used

in place of cotton for antiseptic purposes in surgery. When the peat is reached, it is found to be in a soft state, is dug out and carried to a level place, where the water is trodden out of it by laborers, and the mass solidified. For this purpose, small, flat boards are attached to the peat, and the laborers tramp over the whole extent of the mass of peat in regular order, until all the water has been trodden out. In this way that is done at once which Nature has been trying to accomplish for centuries, but has been thwarted by the continuous accumulations of water in the peat-beds. This operation by the laborers is a singular and interesting sight. When the water is all trodden out, the peat is cut by sharp-bladed spades into oblong blocks or bricks of a uniform size, which are put up in piles, somewhat as freshly-made brick is stacked to be dried by the sun and wind. The other kind of peat is found lying close to the surface, and, after being dug out, the water is pressed out of it by machinery. The blacker and finer the peat, the more solidly it can be pressed, which much increases its value.

CHAPTER II

The People and Their Customs

The Dutch People.—From the country with its varied objects of interest, let us turn now to the people who inhabit it and their characteristics.

The Dutch are the descendants of four hardy German tribes, the Batavi, the Catti, the Kanani-

fates and the early Frisians; also of Danes (who remained there, as in England, after repeated piratical attacks upon the coasts) and the Salii. The latter dwelt somewhere in the present provinces of Groningen and Overijssel, whence they went to the conquest of France, and there introduced the Salic Law. Like most European peoples, the Dutch differ in size and complexion, some being tall and fair, others dark and comparatively short. The latter complexion is found most frequently among the people of North and South Holland. On the whole they are fine-looking, some of the women being considered beautiful, particularly those of the province of Friesland. The author has in his possession the picture of a four-year old Frisian girl that would take the prize anywhere at a baby show.*

The enterprise of the people is sufficiently demonstrated by the great undertaking they have carried out. Foremost among these are the barriers they have erected against their ancient enemy, the sea, already described, and the vast engineering works constructed to facilitate and increase their commerce and their communication with other parts of the world. Among the triumphs of their engineering enterprise and skill, not the least is the great railroad bridge at Moerdyk. It covers a length of one and one-half miles, and consists of fourteen immense arches, resting upon granite piers.

Hollanders took the lead in North Polar expeditions, when Barentz and Heemskerk sought a

*It is reproduced as the frontispiece to this volume.

Northeast passage to China and the East Indies. This was in the Sixteenth Century, when the Hollanders had been forbidden by Spain to sail to those distant parts of the world for the purposes of commerce. They sent their intrepid seamen to every known or unknown sea, some of them circumnavigating the globe, while others, like Schouten, Tasman and Van Diemen discovered New Holland, now called Australia, New Zealand, Tasmania and Van Diemen's Land. New York city and state owe their origin to the Hendrik Hudson whom they sent out on his voyage of discovery. Wherever their great enemy, Spain, had forbidden them to carry their ships, they boldly struck out, north and south, east and west, and created a commerce that, even before they had been recognized as an independent people, covered every sea with the tri-colored flag, and by the establishment of the East and West Indian companies gave them the rich possessions of the East Indian Archipelago, and, for a number of years, made them masters of Brazil. Their commerce to-day takes high rank with that of the most advanced nations.

Their indomitable courage has been illustrated again and again, from the time that Cæsar created his trusted and faithful Batavian legion, through the almost ceaseless wars that devastated the land during the reign of the several independent Counts, and that were brought upon them by the houses of Burgundy, Bavaria and Austria, which in turn ruled and oppressed them. No people ever showed more persistent heroism than that

shown by the Netherlanders in their life-and-death struggle for civil and religious liberty against the intolerable tyranny of Charles V. and his son Philip II. of Spain, a war lasting for eighty long years, beginning on the twenty-third of May, 1568, and only ending on January 30, 1648, when Spain was forced to recognize the independence of the Republic of the Seven Provinces. Then the new-born but vigorous nation became a power whose hand and influence were felt by the mightiest kingdoms of Europe. That this characteristic has not been lost in their descendants was demonstrated in the past century on the fields of Quatre Bras and Waterloo, on which latter it was largely owing to the steadfast, unyielding courage of the Dutch troops under the Prince of Orange that Wellington, according to his own testimony, was able finally to defeat the boasted Conqueror of Europe. In still later days, it has been shown again and again in the repeated contests with the treacherous Achinese on the northwest coast of Sumatra, and, only a couple of years ago, during the war waged by England against the Boers. This trait has enrolled upon the nation's scroll of fame a long list of names second to none possessed by any nation; names of men who, in military or naval warfare, have gained undying renown wherever their deeds are known.

Their honesty used to be proverbial. A Dutch merchant's word was considered as good as his bond. Now, alas! as a result of a decadence in public morals, speculation has, at times, been rife.

And yet, when gross dishonesty has been practiced, it has often been in consequence of foreign evil example. This was illustrated by the effect on the people at large after the French Revolution. A more sad, and, to Americans, more humiliating, illustration is found in the fact that embezzlement in the Netherlands is called "Americanizing." There was a time, however, and it is not entirely past, when a Dutchman was faithful to his word even at the peril of his life. Two notable examples of this are the following:

The first is that of Albrecht Beylinck, who, during a protracted civil war, was in command of the city of Schoonhoven, when it was besieged by an army of the opposite party. After a long and obstinate defence, the city was compelled to surrender on honorable conditions. These were granted, although only with the proviso that the commander of the town should be given up as a prisoner. To this Beylinck himself agreed, while knowing full well that he would lose his life as well as his liberty. When he was taken, he was condemned to be buried alive. Beylinck, too proud to plead with the enemy for grace, or for a change of his cruel sentence, merely asked for postponement of its execution till he could go to Gouda to settle up his affairs. This was granted on the promise that he would return. He went, and, when his affairs at home were arranged, returned according to his word, and the sentence was carried out to the letter.

The other instance is that recalled by a painting in the National Museum at Amsterdam. It tells

the story of the self-sacrifice and fidelity to his pledged word of a Reformed minister, the Rev. Antonius Hambroeck, and is connected with this episode: In 1666, the island of Formosa, then a Dutch possession, was attacked by the Chinese. Their commander, whom the historian calls Coxinga, had made a prisoner of the above named minister, who was chaplain of the Dutch fort Zeelandia on that island; and justly fearing that, from that fort as a starting point, the East India Company might recover possession of the island, he sent the chaplain into the fort with proposals that he hoped would induce its commander, Goyet, to evacuate the place, making the minister promise to return to the Chinese camp if he were unsuccessful. But the Dutch commander scornfully rejected the proposals of the Chinaman, and the minister, though well aware of the fate that awaited him, returned and was beheaded. The painting represents the heroic preacher in the act of bidding his family and comrades farewell as he goes to his doom.

The Netherlander is generally reserved and punctilious. In the former characteristic, he resembles somewhat his island neighbor of England. Though among friends he may carry his heart on his sleeve and often be too confiding, with strangers he is apt to hold himself aloof, and does not seem to believe in the too strict application in every way of the Apostolic injunction, "Be not forgetful to entertain strangers." Long and unprofitable experience with persons from other lands has rather fortified than weakened this dis-

position. This characteristic may furnish one reason why Dutchmen are so often described as phlegmatic; a characterization again and again contradicted both in their multitudinous fights by land and sea and in their public amusements. While not so volatile as their southern neighbors, the Belgians, or as the French, they are as capable of being aroused to patriotic ardor or enthusiasm for art in any of its forms as other peoples.

Their passions also can break forth with a violence all the greater because generally kept under such restraint; like some volcanoes, whose eruptions are the more terrific as the fires within them have had the longer time to prepare for the outburst. Proofs of this were given when the furious mob at The Hague massacred the brothers De Witt, and when violent feuds have broken out with murderous violence between the soldiers of a garrison and the sailors of some man-of-war on shore-leave.

The classes above the laboring ranks are very punctilious in regard to social etiquette, carrying this to a ludicrous extreme. The exactions arising from it on the part of those of superior social rank are apt to chafe one who has been accustomed to move in a freer atmosphere, and in whom Burn's dictum, "A man's a man for a' that," is more fully felt and followed in practice. Their ideas of what is dignified or becoming in the members of certain professions are frequently quite peculiar, and seem to an American amusing and contradictory. A minister of the gospel, for instance, or a schoolteacher, who should be

seen rowing or sailing in public, would be likely to be severely criticized and censured by the church or school authorities, while, on the other hand, to visit a public garden and there smoke a cigar, or drink a glass of wine or beer, would not affect his dignity in the least, so far as public opinion goes.

Dress of the Natives.—It is doubtful if in any other civilized country such a variety of costumes may be found as in the Netherlands. That of the city people differs little from our own, resembling much more our American styles than the dress of the better classes in England or Germany. These latter countries, by a sort of tacit revolt against the autocratic control of fashion in Paris, seem to have set up a style of their own, particularly in the dress of the men, so that in a mixed crowd of foreigners of the better class it is quite easy to distinguish an Englishman or a German by the shape of his hat, or the cut of his coat. In Holland, on the other hand, while not slavishly following the dictates of Parisian fashion plates, they have adopted styles which more nearly resemble the cut ordained by the French goddess of fashion. One might easily mistake some of the leading merchants and men of affairs there for either Frenchmen or Americans. The same observations apply largely also to the matrons and maidens of Dutch cities.

There are certain classes even in the cities, however, whose dress wholly differs from that usually seen among us, and, indeed, from that worn anywhere in the world. This is the peculiar costume prescribed for the orphans. It seems as if the

managers of such institutions had been actuated by the cruel idea that the unfortunates, who have been left to be brought up by the cold hand of charity, should have their forlorn condition proclaimed to the public in some emphatic form. Each orphan asylum clothes its charity-inmates in a dress of particular cut, and of different and distinguishing colors, so that by it one can at once see to what asylum the boy or girl belongs. In some cities the dress is parti-colored, one side being dark, the other light. For example, in Amsterdam one may see orphans, who, as you look at one side of them, are dressed in red, while seen on the other side they are in black. With such a dress, it is, of course, impossible for a child to hide in a crowd in order to escape from the rough usage that they may think they suffer in the asylum. How those who have outgrown their childhood in those institutions must long for the time when these badges of misfortune can be thrown aside!

Apart from these, and the occasional servant-girl who retains the peasant costume of her own section, there is little in the popular dress of the cities that would remind one of being in a strange country. But as soon as one leaves the limits of any city, such reminder meets him on every hand. Not only has each province a peasant costume peculiar to itself, but each district, or department of a province, and each island, distinguishes its peasantry in this way. This applies especially to the provinces cut up by rivers or by arms of the sea. Zeeland, for instance, is cut up into a number of

islands by the broad arms that form the delta of the Scheldt. Each island of Zeeland has a style of dress entirely its own; one that is never modified by that prevailing on the other side of its watery boundary.

The peasant dress in some sections is rich and becoming, particularly that of the women, while in other parts it is grotesque and bizarre. The handsomest and most picturesque styles are mostly found in the provinces of Friesland and North Holland. In these the precious metals play a conspicuous part, notably in the adornment of the head; for the skull of the wearer is covered by a closely fitting cap, or helmet, of either gold or silver, according to the wealth of the wearer. It is entirely plain, and is often an heirloom that is handed down from generation to generation. It generally wholly hides the hair, although in some cases a tress is permitted to hang out on each side. Over this is worn a lace hood, often of exquisite workmanship, the flaps of which hang gracefully down to the shoulders. When this head-gear frames a beautiful face, it makes as charming a picture as one will find under any sun.

For a complete contrast to this, one has only to cross the Zuyder Zee to the Island of Marken, where may be seen the most bizarre costumes to be found among civilized men. When the stranger looks at the wide puffing breeches of the men, their short jackets, coming almost to the arm pits, and their yellow, square-cut hair, he instinctively asks whether these can belong to the same people

from among whom have come some of the greatest heroes and most skilful magicians with the brush and color that any nation has produced. In still other sections one will find among the peasants the knee-breeches and low shoes adorning the sturdy legs of the men, while both breeches and vests are enriched with silver or gold buttons.

Gold and Silver Dress Ornaments.—Often the waistband is covered with a row of silver buttons, the size of large medals, the centre being the largest, the others diminishing in size to right and left. They are beautifully engraved or chased. The vest of the rich farmer frequently has a row of gold filagree buttons, as finely wrought as any work that ever came from the deft fingers of a Hindu goldsmith. The author met one of these farmers, a dealer in cattle, in the Zeeland island of Tholen, who, when a guest once at a dinner given by some merchants in London, was seated next to a “great” lady, who so strongly admired his row of splendid buttons that she offered to buy one of them. The Zeeland farmer refused to sell for any consideration; but, with a politeness that would hardly have been looked for in one of his class, after he had noticed the fair lady’s chagrin and disappointment, he took out his pen-knife and cut off one of the coveted buttons. As he handed it to her with a courteous bow, he said that, while he could not sell one of the articles, he begged the privilege to make a present of it to her, requesting that she would keep it as a souvenir of the occasion.

One peculiarity about the peasant dress is that

no distinction is made in the style as regards the age of the wearer; father and son, mother and daughter, are dressed exactly alike, the only difference being in the gold or silver ornaments, for which the children are disqualified.

The ornaments for the head and face differ as much in the various sections as the costume. In some, the women wear an engraved, golden plate, somewhat in shape like a flattened shoehorn, extending over a little more than one-half of the forehead. At the cheeks, by the ears, there projects on each side a twisted ornament, like a partly uncoiled wire spring, usually of fine yellow gold, from which again are suspended other ornaments, often in the shape of the inside of the flower we call "bleeding heart," the end of it being finished with a pearl. In other sections this cheek ornament has peculiar, square, flat projections, standing out like the blades of a propeller. The necklaces are either of carnelian or garnet, there being frequently four rows, held together by beautifully wrought clasps, the centre-piece of which is barrel-shaped and of delicate openwork. This kind of neck ornament is worn also by many women in the cities, although there the gold necklaces are frequently a succession of flat links. Once a young girl kindly removed her necklace for the author to examine. It consisted of a string of one hundred and one finely-cut garnets, strung on silver thread, with a lock of delicate filigree gold in barrel-shape, set with twelve garnets around its greater circumference, which again was

attached to two smaller openwork barrels of gold, that connected the lock with the necklace.

Two things in the dress of the peasant girls distinguish them from their sisters in the cities, namely, the superabundant quantity of heavy skirts, or petticoats, and the very short sleeves. The sleeves usually stop at the elbow, leaving the well-rounded, lower arm bare, and rendering them, by exposure to the weather, as deep in color as the rich-tinted cheeks.

The hats, both of the male and female portions of the population, make a significant mark by which to distinguish the peasantry of the different provinces. Even different pursuits or occupations are distinguished in some sections by the shape of hat worn by men and women. In some of the northern and southern provinces the stiffly starched, ruffed cap has been a prevailing fashion among the women, some of them having large, flaring sides, while others clasp head and face in a close embrace. The women's hats in some sections are little more than stiff, truncated cones, open at the side which goes over the head, fitting close, and without any projection to protect the face against wind and sun. Others, again, are large, flat bonnets, with wide-spreading rims. The latter are worn by the fish-peddlers in Zeeland, who trip along from town to town with a gait resembling the waddle of ducks, carrying their loads of fish in large baskets suspended from the ends of a yoke carried upon the neck. Under any style of hat, the stiff cap is usually worn, completely hiding the hair, the Dutch peasant women

having apparently been trained for generations to disregard this part of womanly beauty. A young suitor would have a difficult job to surreptitiously cut off a lock of hair from the head of his lady-love. The city girls, however, made up for this lack on the part of their country sisters by cultivating as fascinating braids, or curls, as ever anywhere captivated the hearts of youth of the opposite sex.

Wooden Shoes.—If one were to judge from most of the illustrations in our books and magazines, the conclusion would be that wooden shoes of the old-fashioned, sharp-pointed pattern were the only articles, besides stockings, worn in Holland to protect the feet. They are worn a great deal, to be sure, by laborers in the country districts, and in the poorer sections of the cities, but, even by these, only or mainly where hard and dirty work has to be done, or when roadways are covered with snow or mud. But there is a wooden shoe which is worn in winter even by city boys; this resembles in shape a common, low shoe, is square-toed, painted black, and often carved on its upper front. This, with a lining of fine straw, or hay, makes a most comfortable covering for the feet during the wet fall or in the winter months.

His wooden shoe frequently serves the Dutch boy as a formidable weapon in the many battles which those of different quarters of a town wage with each other. With this in hand as a club, a boy will rush at another and deal out blows that sometimes result in badly bruised, if not broken,

heads. They have one way of using this that proves both the possible savagery and dexterity of the Dutch urchin; it is by slipping the heel of the right foot out of the wooden shoe, so that only the toes remain inside, and then, taking a step backward with the left foot, hurling the wooden missile (with a kick) at the head of an opponent. In this they are as expert as a Filippino with his bolo.

Homes of the People.—In the Netherlands, as in every European country, the dwellings of the inhabitants of the city differ from those of the peasantry. In the latter, however, there are not the inconveniences and squalor so often seen in the peasant houses elsewhere in Europe, while not a few of them have interiors that have often furnished a worthy theme for the brush of some artist. The city houses are diverse in style, some of them being quite elegant, even palatial, particularly those of the middle and higher classes. The step-formed gables, so often found in pictures of Dutch houses in our magazines or books of travel, are most numerous in the city of Haarlem.

The most fantastic style of houses, if style it can be called, is found in Rotterdam and Amsterdam, and in the older parts, particularly in the last-named city, many of these houses seem to be reeling and leaning in every direction, for all the world like a lot of revelers at a Dutch Kermis. The newer parts of those cities, however, are filled with elegant residences, pleasing to the eye because of their variety of style. In the newer

sections of Rotterdam not one monotonous line of buildings is to be found.

The country residences of the wealthier burghers and of the nobility are also occasionally of a beautiful style of architecture, while some of them are quaint and even grotesque. They are generally built near some river bank, or canal, though often are hidden away from the high-road, or streams, in some spot full of the music of the delightful songsters of the ancient woods.

To each of these summer residences some particular name is given, expressive, perhaps, of the owner's object in seeking a retreat there from the cares of office or labor. These names are sometimes quaint and sometimes rather florid; e. g., "The Pearl," "Quite Content," "Sweet Rest," "Retreat from Care." On the gateways of the country residences of the nobles one usually finds their coats of arms, sculptured or in metal, with the expressive phrases they have chosen as the mottoes for themselves and their families.

All of these country retreats have more or less extensive gardens and parks, which are artistically laid out and beautifully kept; those belonging to the wealthier classes have their green and hot-houses, in which the finer fruits and exotics are raised, and parks filled with deer, and with birds of gay and splendid plumage, among which peacocks and the different varieties of pheasants are conspicuous. The peacock is quite a common bird on most of the farms of Holland.

Bright Doors and Door-knobs.—There is one thing always noticeable about the Dutch city

house of the better class, and that is the lustre of the paint on the front doors and the mirror-like brightness of the door-plates, knobs, knockers and bell-handles. The exquisite gloss of the paint would make most of our painters stare with envy, while the metal work is so constantly polished that it shines like burnished gold. Even where the exterior of the house is lacking in architectural beauty, the interior makes up for this lack in its finished elegance. Frequently the paneling of doors and wainscoting, instead of being uniformly rectangular, is ornamentally curved in something akin to the rococo style. The paint within also glistens as if highly varnished; this effect is produced by the admixture of some ingredient giving the same result as varnish without the danger of cracking. Frequently the mantel-pieces of the rooms are adorned with paintings of scriptural, historical or romantic signification. They are set in the wall, above the mantel of the fireplace, covering the entire space to the ceiling, and are sometimes set off with companion-pieces at the sides, or with ornamental scroll-work.

Dutch Furniture.—The furnishing of a Dutch house begins at the outside, and of such the benches at either side of the front door and the peculiar looking-glasses that project from the front windows, constitute the main parts. These little mirrors are hung out from one of the lower front windows, sometimes also from the upper ones, when more than one family occupies a house. They are suspended, at a slight angle, from iron arms that fit in sockets fastened to the

window-frame, one on each side of the window. They are veritable looking-glasses, not for the purpose of looking into, but of looking by means of. They are called by a most appropriate name, *spionnen*, (spies), for by their means anyone sitting behind the lace curtain of the window can spy out all that is passing in the street, either up or down. Sometimes, midway between the two side ones, another *spion* is so hung as to give to the person inside a view of one calling at the front door, an excellent arrangement to prevent the reception of an unwelcome visitor, facilitating the use of the common white lie of "not at home."

Much of the furniture is of mahogany, so highly polished that it shines like a mirror. This is also the case with the metal ware in the different rooms, each article shining with a lustre one would scarcely look for in the baser metals. So far at least as outward brilliancy goes, the tidy Dutch housewife has surpassed the efforts of the old alchemists by changing common metals into the resemblances of silver and gold.

Among the things to which her skilful hands give this glitter is a piece of furniture called the *doofpot*; a covered metal pot used for the keeping of partly burned peat, one of the leading articles of fuel in the Netherlands. This peat, (turf, as it is there called), is sold in oblong blocks, each about the size of two bricks, put one on top of the other. When this is burned through, but not consumed, it is taken out of the fire and put into the *doofpot*, the tight-fitting cover is put on, and the coal becomes extinguished, to be preserved for

further use. The pot is made of strong sheet-iron, or of copper, with brass handles on the side, the feet and the knob that surmounts the cover being of the same metal. The dead coals preserved in this way are put into the fire again, when needed, and make a slow but constant heat over which to cook anything needing a steady fire without blaze. These revived coals are also used in cold or damp weather in footstoves, another piece of furniture peculiar to the Netherlands, and brought over to America along with the old-fashioned bellows by the early emigrants to our shores. It is a wooden box about ten inches square with an open front and perforated top. Into this is placed a small open earthenware receptacle to hold the coals. It is now used almost exclusively by women at home or in the churches. One may see pyramids of these footstoves piled up in the otherwise unused spaces of many houses of worship which, until recently, were wholly destitute of other heating appliances. Except here and there some very aged man or invalid, the male members of the congregations do not share in this article of comfort. When one remembers that the churches are wholly without carpets, and that the service is frequently of three hours duration, (the sermon requires at least one half of that period) it demanded no little heroism to sit through it all with the thermometer near the zero-mark. This applies especially to the boys, who are compelled to sit through the entire service by the side of their fathers. Do they ever rebel? No; for rebellion there usually brings swift retribution. Nev-

ertheless boys, in church or out of it, have a way of outwitting parental watchfulness or evading commands. These comfortable footstoves are looked after by the sexton and his assistants, who are usually some members of his own family, and are furnished to the women at one cent each.

Peculiar beds are found almost everywhere in the Netherlands. They are made in an alcove, built in between two adjoining rooms, or into the side of the room. If between adjoining rooms, it is usually enclosed by a door on the one side and a partition on the other; otherwise it is curtained off by hangings of chintz, or tapestry. They make on the whole, comfortable bedsteads, so deep that it is next to impossible for a sleeper to fall out of them, even if he should be tossed about by evil dreams. They are found on the lower floors mainly; the bedsteads on the upper floors being generally like modern ones, but never without a canopy above them, from which curtains are suspended, so as to leave the sleeper undisturbed, either by mosquitoes, the glare of the night-lamp, or the too-obtrusive, early sun. The feather-bed cover, so common in Germany, is not used in Holland.

Dutch heating and cooking stoves are in several respects different from those used in America, although Yankee ingenuity and skill are driving out the home-made article. The ordinary cooking-stove consists of a round, cast-iron firepot, with a long, flat, sheet-iron body set at right angles to it, along the sides of which are fastened iron or brass rods, on which to hang small articles of napery to

dry, and at the same time to prevent the slipping off of the cooking utensils.

Furnace for Lighting Pipes.—One more article of furniture particularly Dutch should be mentioned. This is the *comfoortje*, (the little comfort), a name which at once calls up the comfortable gatherings at the homes and clubs of the sociable smokers. It consists of a small vase, or beaker-shaped vessel, of copper, trimmed with brass into which part of a live coal is put for the lighting of pipes. The pipes in use are the long, straight-stemmed Gouda pipes. After being filled with the delicious, long-cut tobacco imported from the Dutch East Indies, the pipe is turned, bowl down, upon the glowing coal, and lighted without the spilling of any part of the precious weed; then the cover of fine woven wire is put on, and the devotee of the fragrant plant proceeds to enjoy its gentle intoxication. The cheapness of matches and cigars, however, is rapidly sending this comfortable piece of furniture into limbo, although there still are clubs where the long-stemmed pipe and the *comfoortje* are employed. In such clubs, and in some taverns, a rack is kept in which the pipes of the frequenters are laid, each with the name of its owner or his number on it, and each having its own place, to invade which would be an unpardonable offense.

Dutch Home-Life.—A description of the homes of the people of Holland calls for some account of their home-life. It has been said that no other language has an equivalent for the English word "home," except the German, which has the word

heimath. Though the Dutch do not have an equivalent word, the spirit of the word they possess in as great a degree as any other people, so that their less significant term *te huis*, means for them fully as much as our word "home." This was finely emphasized once by the Dutch poet Ten Kate, when a guest at a feast in England. He was then asked, after several toasts had been given, and "Home, Sweet Home" had been played, if the Dutch had a phrase equivalent to "Home, Sweet Home." The poet instantly arose, moved his hands through his hair and improvised these lines, (I give a somewhat free rendering of what he said in his native tongue):

"Seek for bliss not in the circle
Of the wide world's mighty round;
Home alone is the real centre
Where true happiness is found."

The Divine ordainment of the home has nowhere been more fully recognized than in Holland. The father is still king and priest, ruling the house with strict, but kindly and loving authority. Before each principal meal, breakfast, dinner and supper, (besides these there are two other refreshment periods, the coffee-hour in the forenoon and the afternoon tea; but these are not meals), the head of the house first asks the Divine blessing. This amounts to far more than our customary short grace, being more like the prayer offered at our family worship, of which, indeed, it takes the place. At the close of the meal, the Bible is read; this is followed again by a prayer of thanksgiving. This Bible reading is not a haphaz-

ard affair, but is consecutive and connective, the historic and prophetic parts being read at breakfast, the Psalms at dinner, and the New Testament in the evening.

This custom, of course, is current mainly among the stricter religious classes of the Protestants, and to those whose occupation permits the following of this order; mechanics, laborers or farmers, even when religious, having no time for such an observance except at the evening meal. The custom is, unfortunately, rapidly on the decline, although, even among the most liberal sects, grace at meals is generally observed.

The strict and yet affectionate nature of Dutch family government may be illustrated by a couple of interesting anecdotes. On a certain occasion Queen Wilhelmina, when a young girl, had some difficulty with her servants about a matter in which she was at fault. Upon investigation her mother, the Queen Regent, finding that her child was to blame, ordered her instantly to bed. As it was long before her usual bedtime, this was the severest punishment that could be inflicted upon her. While lying in bed the little royal witch concocted a scheme of revenge, and at seven the next morning she went to her mother's bedroom, intending to make her realize the royal authority of her daughter. She rapped loudly at the door. To the question, "Who is there?" she replied, "The Queen of Holland," in as authoritative a tone as her voice could command. The reply came instantly, "Why, it is altogether too early for a reception of the queen." Disappointed, but

not entirely baffled, she waited and thought awhile, then rapped again. Now, when again asked who was there, she answered, "Your Wilhelmina," whereupon the mother's voice at once responded, "Oh, for her the door is always open!"

The son of the author's former pastor and drill-master in the Catechism, the Rev. Charles Ter-nooy Apel, when candidate for a pastorate, had been to a certain town where he preached a very liberal sermon. This was reported to his aunt at Flushing, who was as strictly orthodox as his good father had been, but who was a loving mother to Charles, and had most liberally supported him during his student career. On his return to Flushing she gave her nephew an unusually cold reception. After sitting for some time in anything but a comfortable mood, he arose and extended his hand to bid his aunt good-bye, when she smote him with the words, "With such a liberal fellow I do not shake hands!" "All right," answered Charles, "but won't you kiss me good-bye then?" "O yes," she cried, "for my Charlie I've always a kiss!"

The home always has been the centre of family enjoyment. In it music, vocal and instrumental, has a large share, though in the presence of strangers even accomplished performers are apt to be restrained by natural reserve. The leading instrument was formerly the pipe-organ; it was the usual family instrument, as well as that for public worship. For this in many homes a special room was set apart, the organ standing in a niche built for that purpose, and the room being always

designated as "the organ-room." The piano has of late taken the place of the organ, excepting in the churches. Formerly the spinet, or clavier, was used, the instrument whose ghost ought to haunt everyone who libels it by our wretched pronunciation of *clavé-yeer*, instead of *cla-veer*, with the accent on the last syllable.

The winter is the great period for home enjoyment. Then the different circles of young people meet at least once a week at each other's houses in turn, to spend the evening in amusing and mirth-making games. In these games the heads of the house frequently take part. The games played are such as all present can participate in, such as the "Bell and Hammer," "Lotto," etc. Cards are usually prohibited at these gatherings. It is worthy of note that these games are never played without some stake, though always a very insignificant one. For this purpose there are used, instead of chips, the cowrie, a small shell brought in great quantities from the East Indies. The custom does not breed gamblers.

Watchmen in the Cities.—Before the introduction of a regular police force in the cities, every town had two kinds of watchmen, the *torenwachter* (tower-watch), and *klepperman*, (clapperman). The first took his position at nightfall on one of the high galleries of a steeple, from which he could overlook the city, and give alarm on his horn at the breaking out of a fire. The *klepperman*, of whom there were as many as the size of the city required, carried a sabre, and also a clapper, or rattle, consisting of a flat board

of resonant wood, through the centre of which the handle was put, with a movable hammer suspended from its end. With this the watchman beat a sort of tattoo, at the same time that he cried out the hour. Rat-tat-tat, tat, tat, "One hour has the clock, the clock has one." This cry, so familiar to many generations of Dutchmen, is now hushed in the death that has come to so many old customs through the more effective methods of modern life.

CHAPTER III

Outdoor Amusements

Outdoor Games.—The outdoor games of boys and girls are those played with tops, marbles and hoops, and include rope-jumping, kite-flying, boating and swimming. Holland boys excel in the beauty and size of their kites, which are large and are ornamented with pretty figures cut from highly-colored glazed paper, while sometimes disks of oiled paper are inserted in the upper part on each side of the central stick through which the sunlight can shine. They long ago had the tailless kite.

The boys are also fond of pitching marbles, cowries, buttons, broken pieces of slate-pencils, and even pennies, in which they become expert. This game is played in some place where a circular hole, about two inches deep, can be dug in the ground. It is played by two players, each staking an equal number of the articles played, which are

either laid on the inside of the fingers, or held between the thumb and finger, and pitched from a measured distance into the hole. Whatever number of articles used is pitched into the hole belongs to the pitcher for "keeps." However much the gambling spirit may be aroused by this game in the Dutch boys, little or none of it is left in them when they attain to manhood. Each then seems to be able to apply to himself the apostolic words, "When I became a man, I put away childish things."

There is one game played in summer that could only be played in that land of canals and ditches. When the weather is all right the boys go out into the country to leap ditches. For this they have frequently a long pole, called *polderstok*, which they set at an angle into the ditch, a little more than half-way across, and, taking a firm hold of the upper end, swing themselves over. This not only affords amusing exercise, but is accompanied with some risk, as it happens sometimes that the leaper's weight drives the stick so far into the muddy bottom that it gets stuck there and leaves the boy suspended in mid-air.

They have had for many years the game of baseball, although this has only recently been modeled upon the American plan, which, however, it does not yet equal in scientific and vigorous character. The Frisians are reckoned as the best players, and frequent matches are played by them with teams in other parts of the kingdom and in Belgium. Football has also been introduced; but in this they follow the English rather than the

American method of play. A Netherland Football Union was organized a few years ago.

The game of hop-sotch, called by the Dutch *hinkebaan*, (hopping track), said to have originated among the Phœnicians, is much played. Tennis, also, was known very early, having been introduced by the Roman, Claudius Drusus, who is said to have laid out the first tennis court in the Netherlands, although it was not then played exactly as now. This game is called in Dutch *kaatsen*, and a very common proverb is based upon it, viz., "The pitcher must expect the ball to be thrown at him also," and may be rendered, as applied to jokers, "He that plays a joke must expect to have a joke played on him."

One game played by every boy throughout the Netherlands, at Eastertime, is *eyertikken*, (egg-cracking). A full week before Easter the boys begin to collect eggs and boil them hard, keeping their supply until Easter Monday, when the sport begins. They are usually boiled in coffee to make them brown, or in beet-juice to turn them red. As soon as the boys can get away after breakfast, they sally forth with such a supply of eggs as their pockets will hold, and challenge the first similarly supplied boy to the "ticking." Each one tries to crack the larger end of his opponent's egg with the smaller end of his own. The fun comes in, in this struggle, to get the best of each other. Some little fellows are wide-awake enough to shake their eggs before boiling, which makes the contents settle to the larger part, when this may

become as hard as the smaller end. The cracked egg, of course, goes to the cracker.

The Dutch, while generally fond of all games, are, as a rule, not much inclined to the more exciting sports. There are horse-races, but these are confined mainly to country fairs, where they are indulged in with little skill, but with an abandon that one does not see at English or American races. The participants are usually farmers, who put their heavy horses through their paces, but out of it sometimes get considerable speed.

The craze for yacht-racing has struck Holland with considerable force during late years, and has resulted in the establishment of several yacht clubs. Such races are not confined to craft of a prescribed pattern, but are participated in by any vessels capable of entering into competition. Many very awkward-looking sloops, with their round bows and sterns, and with sideboard instead of centerboard, are frequently entered. These sometimes develop a most surprising speed, unwieldy as they look. But the main entries are the trim craft usually seen on such occasions. The race this year (1905) is to be between the Dutch and Belgian Clubs, sometime between June 1 and September 30.

Skating in Winter.—The universal national sports are those which winter affords, provided it brings a sufficient amount of cold to properly congeal the canals and rivers, and of snow to cover streets and roads to a proper depth. The Hollander's skill with skates is equalled in few countries and surpassed nowhere. And with good rea-

son, for from childhood he has been accustomed to move about freely on the narrow blades of steel on the slippery ice as readily as he walks the streets of his town; and winter after winter he has been accustomed to skate on canal, or river, from village to village.

When the author was a boy there was a curious method of ascertaining the sufficient thickness of the ice. It was practiced by Jewish boys, who would not venture on the ice unless they could see frozen air-bubbles underneath. If these bubbles were not there, it proved that the ice was still thin and porous enough to allow the bubbles to rise and hang on the undercrust. As the ice thickened these bubbles would be caught and frozen, and give assurance that the ice was thick enough to bear any number of skaters.

This skill has often stood him in good stead during the wars that his country had to wage, either in bearing despatches, in escaping from the foe, or in waging battles on the ice. A notable proof of its value in the latter case was given during the early years of the revolt against Spain, toward the close of the Sixteenth Century. A fleet of the "Beggars of the Sea," as the patriotic privateers were called, was frozen in near the city of Naarden on the Zuyder Zee. As soon as the Spaniards, who were in possession of Amsterdam, became aware of this they sent a strong force over the ice to capture the fleet. When those on board learned of it a number of the best skaters among the Beggars volunteered to go out to meet the Spaniards. They took along no weap-

ons but swords. On they rushed, while the cannon from the Beggar's ships fired their volleys over the heads of the skaters at the Spaniards. It was a hand-to-hand fight, but one in which the heavily armed foes, who were indifferent skaters, were no match for their swift-footed assailants. In a very short time, the would-be-captors were driven from the field and pursued to within sight of the city they had left a short time before with such exultant hearts and full anticipations. The returning skaters were hailed by the shouts of their comrades. A thaw setting in the next day liberated the fleet.

Wherever there is any skating, *baanvegers* (track-sweepers) are found at certain points, who hail the passing skaters for pennies, very much as crossing-sweepers in cities formerly demanded toll from each crosser. The amount expected from each skater is small, to be sure, but the practice at one time became so annoying that the Skating Club of Holland tried to put an end to it by hiring its own sweepers at a regular wage. Now, for only twenty-five Dutch cents the season, one can become a member of this society, and have free passage along the entire track without being stopped or annoyed. These useful fellows ceaselessly ply their brooms, and so keep the track clear and smooth, and they earn all they get in whatever way they are paid. When the skaters are all gone at night, holes are cut here and there to flood the surface, so that the frost may furnish a smooth track for the following morning. For the convenience of refreshment of these skaters,

tents are set up, on the ice, in which one can put on the skates by a warm stove and refresh himself with a cup of hot chocolate, aniseed milk, and various kinds of cake.

The above named Club also has posts set up on the ice to mark the way and to indicate places of danger, and the morning papers of some cities publish what trips can be planned for the day. In some sections, races are arranged for the poor, the prizes consisting of eatables or fuel. The competitors for the race are selected from the families to be benefited. If the family has no one able to compete, some young man from the less needy classes will fill the place, and, if successful, will hand over the prize to the party he represents.

Skating with many is quite a fine art, and there may be seen all sorts of arabesque figures, the writing of names on the ice, etc. Others seek to excel in swiftness; one young man is known to have covered five miles in four minutes. Yet neither of these things offers as fine a sight as to see plain but rosy-cheeked couples, arms linked, in graceful, swinging motions, now to the right, then to the left, gliding swiftly over the glassy field.

The great danger attending skating on the canals arises from the numerous bridges crossing them. These are often so low that one needs to stoop well to pass under, or, if unobserved, they are likely to send the swift mover suddenly on his back, sometimes to his serious injury. The skill acquired on the ice by some of the peasant women is unique. One sees them balancing a basket, containing eggs or other farm produce, on their

heads, while at the same time they are scudding along fearlessly.

Sleighing.—Next to skating comes that other delightful and universal winter-sport of the Dutch, sleighing. One species of this amusement is unknown to them; the more exciting and dangerous sport of coasting. There are few hills in Holland on which to coast. The sleighs used by the young people are box-sleighs, capable of seating from two to four persons. These are of two kinds, the principal kind being rounded at the front and having a high back, which curves up and backward, somewhat in the form of an inclined question mark (?), by which the one propelling the sleigh pushes it forward. The runners project behind for some distance, so that, when the pusher has sent his sleigh forward on a run, he can jump on them and let the sleigh glide on for a distance by the momentum given, and, at the same time, give himself a ride.

In the use of some of the sleighs the warlike disposition of the nation crops out again. Sometimes, when a number of sleighers from different quarters of a city (between whom, by the way, there is usually a feud of long standing) gather on a wide street or market-square, they are apt to butt into each other, and not always by accident. As a protection against injury from this source, some sleighs have their forward part armed with a thick iron bar, terminating in a knob, firmly fastened to an iron band attached to the body of the sleigh, just like the beak of an ancient Greek galley. When a sleigh like this comes into contact with an

opposing one, the effect is apt to be disastrous. It often proves to act as a preventive of hostilities, just as a well-armed nation is most likely to be left at peace by intending foes.

But the fun is not all of this savage kind, by any means. Great enjoyment lies in a young lad taking a couple, or two couples, if the sleigh be a two-seated one, of his best girls, for a moonlight sleigh-ride. It is very hard work for the lad, but he finds a rich reward in the smiling eyes of his passengers, particularly when he is permitted to collect his fare in "the coin of the universal realm"—from their ruby lips. Sometimes the lad has to take his little brothers or sisters out; in this he never finds much enjoyment.

Another kind of sleigh used by the young folks of Holland is called the *prikslee*, which is a strong box-sleigh, with two long handles behind, held together by a cross-piece, and set at a convenient angle. This seats one or two persons only, and is mostly used on the ice. It is of simple shape and make, such as any handy man may construct for his children. Sometimes it is quite handsome and made of more costly material.

Sleighs drawn by horses, used mostly by the rich, (except those large ones of the farmers in which the whole family can ride to church or market), are often handsome, though of singular forms. They seat one person, and are often in shape like a swan, or some other large bird, the curving neck and projecting head forming the front of the sleigh. The neck of the horse is hung with bells, while another bell swings above his

head, the latter being in an ornamental form, of brass. In this "my lady," wrapped in thick furs, is driven around, while her driver stands on the runners behind, and from there guides the fleet pacer, which, perhaps, gets the larger share of the enjoyment.

CHAPTER IV

Births, Marriages and Funerals

Birth of a Child.—In many respects the general customs of Hollanders are peculiar to the nation, particularly those connected with the three most important events of human life—birth, marriage and death. Nowhere is the entrance of a new mortal into the world attended with so much ceremony as in the Netherlands. As soon as the child has come into visible being, the public is made aware of the fact, not only by announcement in the newspapers, but by public messenger, called the *aanspreker*, (the announcer), who goes from house to house among the friends and acquaintances of the favored family to carry the news. Every passer-by, who may stop to read, as well as every caller, is kept informed of the mother's condition and that of the new arrival by the posting on the door of a daily bulletin. And, lest the peaceful slumbers of the babe might be disturbed, the door-bell is carefully muffled, or, if there be a knocker, a cushion is placed under it.

A personage of almost as great importance in the house as the mother, is the nurse. She is for

the time being the pilot of the domestic ship, the sole autocrat of the establishment. The moment she arrives she at once takes full command, and woe betide the luckless father, or other relative, who would dare to disobey her behests, or dispute her rights. Not even the all-dreaded mother-in-law then dares to wag the tongue, if only in advice. The nurse knows all that ever was, or can be known, about any part of her business; every possible requirement for the child or mother, sick or well. No one, from the paternal head to the most distant relative or casual acquaintance, who crosses the threshold of such a home, but is made to pay tribute to the autocrat of the nursery, and that not in the small coin of the realm. Woe to the visitor who would either dare to treat her with discourtesy or to forget the customary tip. On the next call, such visitor is likely to be haughtily and utterly ignored, if permitted to enter the sanctum at all.

This custom of tipping the nurse is compensated by another—the serving of refreshments to every one who comes to offer congratulations. These consist of coffee, or chocolate, with well-buttered French rolls, which are covered with small but toothsome seed-candies, somewhat like the Scotch sugared caraways called “carvies,” (in Holland euphemistically called “little mice”). By the outside appearance of these candies, the visitor is at once made aware, if unknown before, of the sex of the infant; if it is a girl, by their smoothness; if a boy, by their roughness. In addition to rolls and chocolate, the visitor is served on these occa-

sions with wine or liquor, which is usually a mixture resembling our egg-nog, and called by the singular name *advokaten borrel*, (lawyer's dram), the reason for which we have been unable to discover. Only the more well-to-do on this occasion serve wine, and then in the form of what is called *kandeel*, being a mulled wine, mixed with eggs, sugar and cinnamon.

Whether the person most directly concerned shares in the pleasure thus given and enjoyed may well be doubted. At all events, when one sees the manner in which the poor little wight is handled and its mode of dress during its earliest infancy, one would say that everything was being done to make its infantile soul most bitterly regret that it ever made its appearance among mortals. From the moment it sees the light of day it is put into swaddling clothes, and is so completely wrapped up in them, like an Indian papoose, that any movement of arms or legs is made impossible. Of that apparently most exquisite delight to the infantile soul, next to that derived from the vigorous exercise of its vocal organs, the stretching and kicking of its little legs, it is wholly deprived by its unnatural bonds. It may well seem surprising that a people whose infant feet have from time immemorial been thus severely restrained should ever have become such vigorous kickers against all unlawful restraint and oppression.

When the Dutch child is released from these trammels and permitted to realize that it possesses powers of locomotion, it still is provided with

extraordinary safeguards against possible harm. That it may not tumble in taking its first steps in the rough path of life, it is provided with a wooden frame on rollers or casters, by which to exercise its locomotive energies; and, lest it then should come to grief by the possible upsetting of the vehicle, it is provided with a cap, with thickly padded and projecting top, appropriately called a *falhoed*, (falling-hat).

This ceaseless and punctilious watchfulness for the welfare of the child follows it through all its childhood days, both in the home and in the school. For its amusement in the home, toys the most ingenious and in greatest variety are provided, often the product of the deft hands of the father; while at school the eye is fed and the mind delighted by whatever can relieve the monotony of dry study.

Christening of Children.—Long before the school period has been reached, however, another event has taken place, that occupies a most important place in Dutch home-life. About this centres as great interest as about the child's entrance into life, and it is also accompanied with considerable feasting. The stomach, indeed, is considered such an important part of the human organism throughout Holland, that there is scarcely any enjoyment given to the people but they demand that this part of their system shall be duly remembered. The christening of the child is announced a week beforehand, the announcement specifying in what church and by what clergyman the rite is to be administered, and then comes the

feast of christening. Though no distinct invitation is given, all relatives and friends are made welcome to this feast. The rite is usually administered on a Sunday afternoon. At its conclusion, all retire to the consistory, except the parents, to whom the minister gives a final word of admonition; which done, all return to the house of the child's parents. Here the feast is spread, and when God's blessing has been invoked by the clergymen upon both the feast and guests, the nurse brings in the most important personage of the occasion, and either herself presents it to each of the guests, or, if a godfather or a godmother be present, puts the baby into the latter's hands, who in turn passes it from guest to guest.

It used to be the custom in well-to-do families to lay a photograph of the child by the plate of each guest as a memento, but this is going out of vogue. It goes without saying that the nurse is again pretty well "tipped" on this occasion.

Marriage Customs.—Let us suppose that the child is a boy, and has grown up, and that he is on the point of making a home for himself. The first step, of course, is the finding of a helpmeet. In such case there may come into practice a singular usage, followed at least in one section of the country and carried even to Africa, where it is found among the Boers. This requires that the pair, who seem inclined to marry, shall sit up one night with a candle placed on a stand between them, so as to give them a chance to discover, while this is burning, whether they like each other well enough to become man and wife! If the

candle burns down to the socket before the grave matter is decided, they part, and each is left free to seek some other mate. It seems hardly possible that two young people made of genuine flesh and blood could sit the entire time required by the candle to burn out in glum expectancy as to what one or the other might do to break the ice.

It is required that the banns for a marriage shall be published, and social etiquette is almost equally exacting as to the publication of an engagement. Wedding cards are double, the parents of both parties joining in the announcement, that of the bride's parents being printed on the one side and that of the groom's parents on the opposite side.

Marriage is regarded as a civil contract and must be performed by a burgomaster, or his deputy, at the court house, or city hall. No other marriage is valid. The civil marriage is almost invariably followed, however, by a religious ceremony, either in some church, or at the house of the bride's parents. Both are solemn ceremonies, although the marriage performed in a church is the more elaborate.

Suppose writer and reader are two of the invited guests to a wedding to be celebrated in a church. It is 1.30 of the afternoon. We have taken seats commanding a full view of all the participants in the scene. As the bridal party enters a wedding march is played upon the organ by a skilful performer till the bride and groom are seated in chairs placed for them directly in front of the pulpit. The parents and other attendants

of the parties take their places in pews on either side. When all are seated, the sexton ushers the minister to the pulpit. As soon as he reaches the desk, he gives out a part of the Psalm lxvii, which, accompanied by the organ, is sung by the entire congregation, the bride and groom joining in heartily. At the conclusion, the minister reads some appropriate scriptural selection, which is followed by the singing of two verses from Psalm cxviii. As soon as the sound of this has ceased, the clergyman offers a lengthy but appropriate prayer, after the close of which he delivers a sermon of at least thirty minutes duration. Then parents and other attendants rise and stand, and the bride and groom come forward to kneel before the pulpit, while the minister reads the Dutch liturgy appropriate to the occasion, and at the conclusion pronounces the pair man and wife, "so made after the ordinance of God." These then return to their seats, while the others also resume their places. When the service is so far ended, a collection is taken up for the poor, after which another hymn and the benediction finish the whole. As the parties walk out, a wedding hymn is played to the tune of "Home, Sweet Home."

Funerals.—As soon as one dies the public is informed by the *aansprekers*. They usually go in pairs, each taking one side of the street, stopping at every house. They are garbed in a costume consisting of a long, swallow-tailed coat, from the collar of which hang down the back two, broad, long bands of black crape, bound with silk; a wide-rimmed, low-crowned hat from which falls

on one side another long crape band ; knee-breeches with buckles, and low-cut, silver-buckled shoes. The knee-breeches and shoes have recently gone out of fashion in some sections, as has also the former style of hat, this having been replaced by the high, silk hat. As these go from house to house, they proclaim the mournful news in front of the houses in loud tones. Generally at this day the "announcers" distribute cards, which announce the departure of the deceased, the black borders varying in width with the age of the departed. These *aansprekers* also precede the hearse on foot at funerals. After the hearse follow carriages containing only women mourners ; the relatives of the other sex walk.

It is a lugubrious sight to see such a funeral procession, all the male mourners, who are ranged according to age, wearing mourning cloaks, their heads covered with large, low-crowned, but wide-rimmed hats, whose rims go flapping up and down, like the wings of some large black bird. The author recalls an occasion where the youngest boy, save one, looking along the line of mourners at the flapping hats, became suddenly convulsed with a different sensation from that called for by the occasion. As he passed, with handkerchief covering his face to conceal his laughter and with shaking shoulders, a woman among the on-lookers was heard to say : "Just see how badly that poor lad feels at the loss of his grandfather." Appearances may be deceptive.

After the funeral all return to the house for the customary funeral feast ; for whatever the oc-

casion, your genuine Dutchman must eat, drink, or smoke. An occasional abstainer from drink or tobacco may be found, (there have been Dutchmen who never smoked), but the one who would refuse an invitation to eat must be looked for in some future age.

A funeral service is never held in a church, except in the case of personages of special prominence. The long and sometimes wearisome funeral sermons customary in America are unknown in Holland. The service is only the solemn one prescribed by the church liturgy.

CHAPTER V

Religious and Secular Feast Days

The Kermis.—Intimately connected with the home-life of Holland are its public feasts, because these have their centre in the home, and in these all the members of the family alike share. The most prominent of these are the Kermis, Santa Claus and Easter, not to mention those connected with the birthdays of the royal family.

The word *Kermis*, of late years introduced among us and erroneously spelt "Kirmess," and the feast itself, had a religious origin, though its observance for the last century or more is of anything but a religious character. The original word was "Kerkmis," (Church-mass), and was descriptive of the occasion when the service of the mass was performed once a year for all the people of a district. On this occasion, while the main idea

was religious, the people assembled in families in the central town where the church was located, putting up booths for temporary dwelling and for the sale of merchandise.

The booths were set up in the wide spaces in the neighborhood of the church, and were ranged in regular order, with passages, like streets, between the rows. The same arrangements prevail still. The most frequented of the booths are those which serve whatever may be required for the delectation of the Dutch palate, in which, however, waffles and a kind of doughnut, called in some sections *broedertjes*, (little brothers), in others *poffertjes*, (little puffers), are most in demand. The waffles are always crisp and appetizing. Throughout the day and far into the night these eating-booths are patronized by a ceaseless succession of young couples, who in separate alcoves enjoy the waffles, or doughnuts, and chocolate. No young man in Holland need lack for a fair partner in his enjoyment of the Kermis. If he should be too bashful to ask some maiden, the damsel will meet him more than half way, and let him know distinctly that she is "ready and willing" to share his pleasure, and not infrequently she hands him her purse, with *carte blanche* to spend its contents as he wishes for their mutual enjoyment at the fair.

There are here, also, all sorts of merry-go-rounds, some ingenious ones being boats that quite imitate the motion on rough waves. Of course there are mountebanks and fakirs. Among the latter are the Jewish peddlers of pickles in firkins

carried under the arm. These are followed by street gamins, who cry after them, "A cent a lick, two-and-a-half cents a bite," imitating closely the peculiar nasal drawl of the Hebrew vender.

The village Kermis usually offers the most excitement. One scene may be given that may do for all. Along a level road a post is set up, with a hollow metal tube projecting from it, into which a number of rings are put, one of them projecting at the end. At a measured distance on a track the farmers are ranged, mounted on glossy, ribbon-covered horses, with their arched necks and thick fetlocks, the horses evidently being more accustomed to draw the plough or loaded wains than to speeding in a race. Each competitor is armed with a lance like those employed in the ancient jousts. At the word of command, the one in the lead starts, yelling like a Comanche Indian; his horse seems to catch the excitement, and goes at a speed that is unusual for such a heavy draught-animal. At full speed the lance is aimed at the ring; if the rider bears it off at the point of his lance, the spectators split the air with their acclaim. The one who secures the most rings is the victor, and, carrying away the prize, is borne off by his friends, when all go to celebrate his success.

Within recent years the utter abandon of Kermis revelers has led to the entire abolition of the festival or to a great restriction of it. In most cities it can now be held only for a day, instead of, as formerly, for an entire week.

Santa Claus Festival.—The festival most intimately associated with the home-life of Holland is

that celebrated in honor of the national patron-saint. This falls not on the twenty-fifth of December, as with us, but on the sixth of that month, the day also observed as such by the Holland Society of New York. About this the family affections concentrate as about no other feast. As the sixth of December dawns, the saint is hailed with this song:

“St. Nicholas, good, holy man,
Put your best new cassock on;
Ride in this to Amsterdam,
From Amsterdam to Spain:
Bring us cookies from Cocaign,” etc.

His cassock was supposed to have the power of rendering him invisible, like the “tarnkappe” of Siegfried.

With this, two pretty legends are connected that were current in the author's childhood. The first of these told this story: A certain man had lost all his property and was reduced to want. After vainly trying everything he could think of to retrieve his fortune, he resolved to sell his three daughters, whose great beauty would, doubtless, bring him a large sum. When the unhappy girls became aware of it, they prayed to St. Nicholas, the protector of maidens, for deliverance. The good Saint heard them, went to the house during the night, and, through a broken window, dropped some money that his own father had left him. On the following night he went again and dropped a purse of gold through the chimney. This put the father on his guard, so that he kept watch during the third night, and caught the Saint as he was in

the act of repeating his gift. Then the father asked, "Saint Nicholas, servant of the Lord, why do you hide your good deeds thus?" But from this time everyone knew that St. Nicholas brought his presents in the night.

The other legend tells the story of three boys, who lost their way in a dark forest, and at last came upon a house where they asked for a night's lodging. This was granted; but, while they were quietly sleeping, the wicked owner of the cottage stealthily went to their bed and killed them all, hoping that so he would get the money that he supposed they had about them. But, when he searched their clothes, he found that the poor lads had with them not a thing of value, and so he had murdered them for nothing. Then, to escape detection, he cut up the bodies and put the pieces in a tub in the brine with the pigs' meat. The next afternoon the murderer went to market, where St. Nicholas in his Episcopal robes, met him, and asked if he had any salt pork to sell. When the farmer answered, "No," the Saint asked again, "What about the three pigs in your tub?" Upon this the frightened farmer confessed his crime and begged for pardon. The Saint commanded the cruel wretch to conduct him to his house, and, when they reached there, St. Nicholas waved his staff over the tub, upon which the boys were at once restored to life, and, jumping out of the tub, fell on their knees, and poured out their thanks to their deliverer.

For weeks before the sixth of December arrives the talk of old and young is about the dear

old Saint and his day. Every confectioner is busy with the preparations for that day, each seeking to outrival the others. The demands of the Saint's devotees can only be satisfied by that which shall literally and fully gratify the taste, though the artistic form and decoration are not forgotten. Among these products of the confectioner's skill, made especially for this day, are, first, the filled letters. These are made of a delicate crust, prepared of the best flour and butter, without the addition of water. This is rolled out thin, filled with a delicious paste made of almonds, sugar and various spices, and formed into the letters of the alphabet. From these are selected the initials of the names of friends to whom they are sent, with the compliments of the season. Another kind of cake made and eaten only at this time is made of a stiff dough, rich and sweet, which is pressed into artistically cut wooden forms, whence they come out in all sorts of shapes,—of men, animals, vessels, houses, locomotives, etc.

For weeks, evening after evening, the young people come together in the sitting-room of some confectioner to decorate his artistic creations with gold leaf. Each young man and maiden has a book of gold leaf cut into thin strips, a cup of sizing and a camel's hair brush. The piece to be ornamented is first touched with the sizing, wherever the decoration is most appropriate, when the gold is laid on and pressed down gently with a cotton pad. While this is going on, there is all the joking and gay badinage common among familiars, in whom the desire for fun and frolic

is still strong. When the work stops, the workers are treated to chocolate and cake, and the remaining hour before parting is spent in all gaiety, music and song. This goes on until the last evening before the morning which is to see the windows and the stores of every confectioner filled with these gilded sweets. Then comes the day itself; a day like our Christmas, full of affectionate looks and words, of tokens of kindness and endearment; a day always too short, whose sweet memories linger wherever the happy participant may afterwards wander, bringing back the dear faces so familiar and so loved in that careless childhood, and drawing many a sigh for the vanished joys of the Fatherland.

Other Feast Days.—The feasts of Christmas, Easter and Whitsuntide, the last two called in Holland "Paas" and "Pinkster," are celebrated merely as religious festivals. Each of these, as well as New Year's, has two days allotted for its celebration. In the earliest days of the Reformation there was much opposition to the celebration of these holy days, but, in 1618-'19, the Synod of Dort, by which the Reformed Church order was regulated, ordained that both the twenty-fifth and twenty-sixth days of December should be religiously observed in the churches. For this, the following reason was given: "On the 25th we remember the Christ, who became man for us; on the 26th we remember Stephen, who for Christ's sake laid aside his humanity. On the former we celebrate the birth of Christ on earth; on the latter date the birth of Stephen in Heaven." New

Year's day used to be dedicated to the circumcision of Christ. When this was regularly observed it was ordered that the sermon should have Luke 2:21 for its text, and if New Year's happened to fall on a Sunday, the first half of the text was to be used for the morning sermon and the other half for the evening.

This religious observance of New Year's Day has largely gone out of fashion, and only the custom of calling from house to house and wishing all a Happy New Year remains. This day also has its particular product of the baker's art to celebrate it fitly; a sort of light bun, usually filled with currants, being large in the middle and terminating at each end in a small, flattened ball.

Some Religious Customs.—Because of their peculiarity, something should be said about some other religious customs prevailing in the Netherlands, especially those connected with public worship as observed in the Protestant Churches.

The church service sometimes lasts from two to three hours. The earlier part is taken up by a preliminary service, led by a reader, usually the principal of some public school. He occupies a desk directly in front of the pulpit, the upper part of which, like that of the preacher's desk, consists of openwork brass. On this lies the great folio Bible. As soon as the first bell calling the worshipers together has died upon the air, he gives out part of a psalm, or hymn, which is taken up and sung by those already present, and is joined in by every new-comer, without the accompaniment of the organ. At the conclusion,

he reads a chapter from the Bible, which is followed by the singing of part of another psalm or hymn. This is continued till the time for the regular service arrives, the object being to keep the people in a worshipful mood while they assemble, and to prevent listlessness and whispering. The latter is considered highly indecorous, while the reading of a newspaper in church would be regarded as sacrilege.

The singing is congregational, led by the reader or precentor, and accompanied by the organ, and is often as inspiring as one will hear anywhere. Of late, here and there, choirs have been introduced, but only to assist in the congregational singing, the people themselves being capable of taking the four parts, owing to the training they have received in the public schools as children. In some of the dissenting churches, it is considered a mark of piety to drag out the notes to inordinate length, the effect of which, upon a cultivated ear, is not pleasant. The sermon, with rare exceptions, is delivered without any notes, and, so far as its structure goes, is invariably a finished literary production. Some of the preachers are orators of no mean order.

The main fault an American would find with the discourses is their too great length, extending sometimes to a whole hour. The tedium of this is relieved, however, by the singing of part of a hymn, or psalm, when one-half of the sermon has been given. The hearers often exercise their liberty by standing up during the discourse, and fend off drowsiness by yawning. Another singular sight

is to see the men seated in church with their heads covered ; also standing up for prayer, holding their hats before their faces. When the hour for the regular service arrives, the minister, dressed in the Geneva gown and bands, is ushered by the sexton to the foot of the pulpit, where he stands for a moment in prayer before ascending to his lofty position.

To preserve order and decorum, there is an official subordinate to the sexton, who carries a long stick, with which, mindful of the Scripture, "Without are dogs," he drives out any stray cur that may enter, and keeps unruly boys in awe. The sexes are kept separate in the churches, and, where there is an asylum of any description, or a garrison, or navyyard, the persons belonging to those institutions have particular seats assigned them in the church.

Religious Character of People.—In this connection we may speak of the religious character of the Dutch people. Roughly stated, the population of the Netherlands is made up of about 3,000,000 Protestants and 2,000,000 Catholics—all sects receiving a certain stipend from the government, except the Baptists, who have consistently refused to receive such aid. The old Protestants who are strict Calvinists closely resemble the old Puritans of England and the Presbyterians and Covenanters of Scotland. They are great readers and students of the Bible, with which they are as familiar as with their A B C, and can quote at any time chapter and verse to substantiate some doctrine or controvert some

heresy. They, too, like their Scotch brethren, dearly love a debate upon some dogmatical point, and are as sharp in this as their fellow-believers described in Butler's *Hudibras*, who—

“Could distinguish and divide
A hair, twixt south and south-west side.”

These also were and are now strict observers of the Sabbath, and enforce in their families attendance on the services three times during the day, while all amusements, all recreation and the reading of secular books are strictly prohibited.

This class of the religious community has for some time greatly diminished in numbers, and now constitutes only a small minority. For here, as everywhere, the advancement of more liberal ideas has been productive of a change in the ways and modes of thinking of the people at large. For the latter, one religious service on Sunday is quite sufficient, the rest of the day being spent in recreation, not always, it must be confessed, conducive to a stronger moral life. Those who adhere to the old ways and belief are frequently made the objects of opprobrium. But this is a story which in past times has had repetition in every so-called Christian country.

CHAPTER VI

Art, Science and Education

Art in Holland.—Some one has called Holland “The Wonderland of Art.” Only the merest refer-

ence can here be made, however, to what has been and is being achieved in this or the other higher departments of human activity.

The country has established a school of art equal in some features, even superior, to the schools of Italy and Spain. De Amicis, that charming Italian writer on Holland, says that there are really but two schools of Art, the Italian and the Dutch, all the others being daughters of one of them. There are few countries that can boast of such a long list of masters, who have made the brush inscribe their names on the unfading scroll of fame, from Frans Hals, whose portraits seem not the images of his subjects but the living men themselves, and Rembrandt, that conqueror of light and shade, and Wouverman, the thundering rush of whose horses on the battlefield can almost be heard, to Paul Potter, whose "Bull" could not be bought for a king's ransom, and Van Huysum, of whom all the potentates of Europe begged his marvelous flower-pieces and so on through a succession of names that have vied with the greatest produced anywhere in the past four centuries.

That this mighty spirit of creative art has not yet departed is demonstrated by another and later host of geniuses. I need only name the Mestdags, father and son, the former of whom painted that magnificent "Sunset at Sea," which has been given the place of honor in the National Museum, at Amsterdam, with the "Nightwatch" of Rembrandt; Josselin de Jong, to whom we owe the best portraits of the noble Wilhelmina; Madame Bilders van Bosse, whose woods and bosky groves

seem endowed with life; Madame Vogels-Roozeboom, for whom, as if in response to her name, (Rose-tree), "the fairest flowers rise up, as at a magician's touch, when she raises her brush;" and others, so well-known among us by their great works, Joseph Israels, Mauve, and Jacob, William and Thys Maris.

In sculpture Holland has not attracted such wide attention as in the sister art, although the numerous monuments to her heroes prove that in this, too, she has a noble past; but of late years Odé, Bart de Hove, Van Wyck and, chief, Pier Pander, the crippled son of a poor Frisian mat-plaiter, have gained a good name among their fellows in the same line of art in other countries. The latter was summoned from Rome by Queen Wilhelmina to model the bust of the Prince Consort, Duke Henry of Mecklenburg-Schwerin.

Appreciation and taste for art are cultivated in every school, from the lowest elementary schools to the universities, and are kept alive by frequent exhibitions at numerous art galleries. There are, besides, three societies whose special purpose is to encourage the study and practice of art: the Art Circle at The Hague, the Society of Art and Friendship at Rotterdam, and the Society for the Study of the Beautiful. These are in addition to the regular schools of art, of which the National Academy of Fine Arts stands at the head. By a law of May 26, 1870, an annual competition for prizes in the fine arts was established, to be held at the National Academy. In this only native Dutchmen, or the children of such residing abroad,

can compete. Candidates must first pass a successful examination at that Academy before they can be enrolled among the competitors for the prize in either painting, sculpture, or artistic architecture. Two prizes are offered, one in gold and the other in silver. The successful competitor for the first prize, upon recommendation by the directors of the Academy, may be granted an annuity of twelve hundred guilders (\$480), with an additional one thousand guilders (\$400), annually, for rent of his atelier and models. Among the most notable of the competitors so far have been the sculptors J. H. P. Wortman and J. C. Wienecke, who gained respectively the gold and silver medals in 1896, the subject of the statue in each case being "The Prodigal Son."

In recent years there has been a great revival in repouseé, or hammered work in metal. In this Jan Hendrik Brom, of Utrecht, has become most noteworthy. His "Crucifixion," in chased copper, in the Chapel of the Roman Catholic college at Katwyk, is among the most beautiful of its kind. By the same artist is an exquisite piece, "The Guardian Angel of the City of Maastricht," which is in the possession of the Queen.

In book-illustration, there are few anywhere superior to Jan Braakensiek, who, by his splendid cartoons in the *Amsterdammer*, and by his vigorous and lifelike illustrations elsewhere, has won for himself a more than national reputation.

The artistic work in earthenware produced by the potteries of Gouda, Rosenberg and Delft can

only be mentioned, though the Delft ware has for generations been famous the world over.

In music, Holland may scarcely be mentioned at the same time with Italy, Germany, or France. And yet even in this she possesses a fame that extends from remote times down to the present. As far back as the earlier part of the Fifteenth Century the Netherlands had her great composers and masters in counterpoint, such as Okeghem and his pupil Josquin, who became the great choir leader at St. Marks, Venice; and Adrian Willaert, the teacher of Zarlino, called "the father of modern harmony," who was summoned to take the position of musical leader at the court of Louis XII. of France, a post he held for a number of years. The Italian Guicciardini testifies that in his time the Dutch musicians were sought for by all the courts of Christendom.

Among recent composers of note, she has produced at least three whose names ought to be wider known—Verhulst, De Lang and Mann. But they have rarely published their works, because, strange to say, the national feeling is not strong enough to give them public patronage at home; accordingly they seek recognition for their work mainly at private concerts. Fame in this branch of art has of late years been carried to our shores by some of these masters, and has for several seasons been maintained here by the great baritone, Van Rooy.

The Netherlands is rich in its store of ballads and other compositions dealing with heroic events, for which the terrible Eighty Years' War fur-

nished an abundance of subjects, or with some romantic incidents. Of the latter the author recalls a fine example, describing the parting of two lovers, he impatient to be off to the field of glory, she eager to retain him a little while longer. In it both the metre and the music closely imitate the rhythmic march of troops going to battle, as may be illustrated by four of its lines, although the translation necessarily mars much of the beauty and vividness of the original:

"Hear'st not, my Ada, the drum's urgent rattle?
Hear'st not the shrill sounding trumpets of war?"
"Herman, why dream thus of conquest and battle?
'Tis but thy fancy that calls thee afar."

Among national airs there are few which have more stir and swing to them than the old "Wilhelmus Van Nassauwen;" and there is no country where more melodious chimes are found, to make the air pulsate at every half and full hour with the sweetest music.

The great national instrument is the organ. On this there are some notable performers. Most of these are men, though there are some noteworthy women organists in private life, the best known of whom is the blind Elizabeth Moser, who was educated at royal expense at the Institute for the Blind at Amsterdam. It is remarkable also that several of the Dutch male organists are blind.

The seeker for the grand and sublime in architecture would not find his quest as well rewarded in the Netherlands as in its neighboring Belgium. There are, however, some ancient buildings which have a special beauty of their own, as the City

Hall at Middelburg, the Watergate at Sneek and the Weigh House at Alkmaar, where the red, round Edam cheeses are weighed.

A revival has also come to Holland in architecture of which the most noted exponent is H. P. Berlage, Nz., of Amsterdam, the architect of the fine new Exchange and of the Assembly Hall of the Diamond Cutters Union, both in Amsterdam, and of notable interiors in Hamburg, Berlin, Bremen, Paris and Antwerp.

Scientific Achievements.—In the domain of science the world owes to Holland many a discovery, or invention, that has enriched commerce and enabled the learned to unravel the secrets of Nature, either in the far-sweeping heavens above, or in the minute creatures about our feet. To Jansen and Huygens we are indebted for the first telescopes and microscopes; to Drebbel for the first thermometer; to Christian Huygens for the pendulum; to Musschenbroek for the Leyden jar,

The herring fisheries became to the Netherlanders of more value than all the gold and silver of ancient Peru, when, in 1384, William Beukelsz, of Biervliet, discovered the method of curing fish. In microscopy Holland has given to the world the immortal name of Leenwenhoek; in jurisprudence, Hugo de Groot, the father of International Law and the founder of the laws of peace and war; in medicine, Boerhaave, the rival in fame in this department of Hippocrates and Galen; in military science, Coehoorn, the rival of Vauban in the art of fortification. To-day several of the professors of the Dutch universities are acknowl-

edged authorities in various departments of scientific research; while in anthropology, the researches of Doctor Dubois in Java have done much to establish and prove the theories of Darwin in this particular branch of science.

The great botanist, Hugo de Vries, became widely known among us, during the past summer, by the lectures he delivered at numerous places, and by his opening of the new laboratory of the Carnegie Institute.

Literature.—The literature of Holland is strangely unknown to English and American readers. The cause of this is to be sought for in our almost total ignorance of the Dutch language. What is known of it is largely confined to the writings of Erasmus and Grotius, or Hugo de Groot, which, however, were written in Latin. Had they been written in Dutch, it is likely that even the works of such famous men would have been buried in oblivion. But in this department of human activity there has been no dearth of worthy labor in the Netherlands, from the greatest of her older poets, Vondel, "the Milton of Holland," to those who, to-day, are writing, as he did, for eternity. Although his monument bears the inscription "*Scriptit aeternitati*," (he wrote for eternity), it was not till Mr. L. C. van Noppen, a worthy descendant of Dutch ancestors, a few years ago brought out an excellent translation of Vondel's *Lucifer* that the American literary world became acquainted with this masterpiece.

The list of noteworthy poets, historians and novelists that followed Vondel, from Father Cats,

the most beloved of popular poets, to the novelists van Lennep and Madame Bosboom-Toussaint, is too great to enumerate. Within the last three decades a revival has occurred in Dutch literature that will yet force recognition in other lands; indeed it has already done so in the excellent translation by Miss Putnam of that masterpiece of historic writing, Professor Blok's *History of the Dutch People*. Among those who have taken the lead in this renaissance, the editors of and writers for *De Gids*, one of the oldest reviews in any modern tongue, stands in the forefront; while the young novelist Augusta de Witt, and the great poet, Helen Lapidoth-Swarth, display, the one a marvelous power of description, the other a wealth of invention and imagery, with an almost magical power of expression.

Education.—The work of education in the Netherlands is conducted according to a system so complete and thorough that it would be difficult to point out any defects in it. At its head stands the Minister of the Interior, under whom are three Chief Inspectors, one each for the Northern, the Southern and the Northeastern provinces. Under these there are twenty-five District and one hundred Arrondissement Superintendents. Besides these, there is a system of local supervision, which in places having less than three thousand inhabitants devolves upon the local burgomaster and magistrates; in those of over three thousand inhabitants, upon a specially appointed school commission. Each of these officials must be fully qualified for the discharge of his duties.

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